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Readings and Recitations

FOR

JUNIORS.

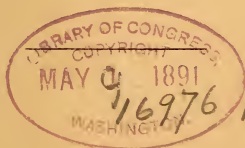
COMPILED BY

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"Aids to Effective Elocution," "Select Recitations," etc.

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PREFACE.

THE Selections in this little book have been made with the greatest care, and will, we trust, impress lessons of Beauty, Truth, and Virtue.

ELEANOR O'GRADY.

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READINGS AND RECITATIONS FOR JUNIORS.

A LESSON OF THANKFULNESS.

ROAMING in the meadow,
Little four-year-old
Picks the starry daisies,
With their hearts of gold.

Fills her snowy apron,
Fills her dimpled hands;
Suddenly, how quiet
In the grass she stands!

“Who made f’owers so pitty,
Put ’em here? Did God?”
“Yes, ’twas God,” I answered,
“Spread them o’er the sod.”

Dropping all her blossoms,
With uplifted head,
Serious face turned heavenward,
“Thank you, God!” she said.

Then, as if explaining,
 (Though no word I spake,)
“Always must say, ‘Thank you.’
 For the things I take.”

Blessed little preacher,
 Clad in robes of praise!
Would we all might copy
 Your sweet, thankful ways!

Time to fret and murmur
 We could never make,
Should we first say, “Thank you,”
 For the things we take.

THE FOOLISH HAREBELL.

A HAREBELL hung its wilful head:
“I am tired, so tired! I wish I was dead.”

She hung her head in the mossy dell:
“If all were over, then all were well.”

The wind he heard, and was pitiful;
He waved her about to make her cool.

“Wind, you are rough,” said the dainty bell;
“Leave me alone—I am not well.”

And the wind, at the voice of the drooping dame,
Sank in his heart, and ceased for shame.

“I am hot, so hot!” she sighed and said;
“I am withering up; I wish I was dead.”

Then the sun, he pitied her pitiful case,
And drew a thick veil over his face.

“Cloud, go away, and don’t be rude;
I am not—I don’t see why you should.”

The cloud withdrew, and the harebell cried,
“I am faint, so faint! and no water beside!”

And the dew came down its million-fold path;
But she murmured, “I did not want a bath.”

A boy came by in the morning gray;
He plucked the harebell, and threw it away.

The harebell shivered, and cried, “Oh! oh!
I am faint, so faint! Come, dear wind, blow.”

The wind blew softly, and did not speak.
She thanked him kindly, but grew more weak.

“Sun, dear sun, I am cold,” she said.
He rose; but lower she drooped her head.

“O rain! I am withering; all the blue
Is fading out of me;—come, please do.”

The rain came down as fast as it could,
But for all its will, it did her no good.

She shuddered and shrivelled, and moaning said,
"Thank you all kindly;" and then she was dead.

Let us hope, let us hope, when she comes next
year,

She'll be simple and sweet. But I fear, I fear.

George Macdonald.



SWEET-PEAS.

"PLEASE wear my rosebud for love, papa,"
Said Phebe with eyes so blue.

"This sprig of myrtle put with it, papa,
To tell of my love," said Prue.

Said Patience, "This heart's-ease shall whisper,
papa,

Forget not my love is true."

Papa looked into the laughing eyes,
And answered, to each little girl's surprise:

"My darlings, I thank you, but dearer than these—
Forgive me—far dearer are bonnie sweet-peas!"
Then he clasped them to his heart so true,
And whispered, "Sweet P's—Phebe, Patience,
and Prue!"

Lillian Payson.

THE DAISY AND THE FERN.

[If the subjoined poem is not remarkable for its reach of thought, it certainly is remarkable as being only one of a volume written by a little English girl, Maude Edgerton Hine, when less than eight years old. Assuredly Chatterton himself was not more of an infant prodigy than the juvenile author of these lines.]

THE day was hot, the sun shone out
And burned the little flowers,
Who earthward dropped their weary heads
And longed for cooling showers.

One little daisy, hot and tired
And scorching in the sun,
Had altered much, for fair was she
When the morning had begun.

“Come, put yourself beneath my shade!”
A graceful fern thus spake;
“For if you stay out there, dear flower,
You ’ll shrivel up and bake.”

So daisy leaned towards the fern
And hid beneath her shade,
And on the fern’s cool mossy root
Her burning petals laid.

No sunlight fell on her, but, oh !
The poor fern had it all;
She drooped down low, and lower still,
Who once was straight and tall.

“ Daisy,” she said, “ I’m dying fast,
My life is near its end.
My time with you is almost past,
So farewell, little friend.”

Then daisy wept, her tears ran down
Upon the poor fern’s root.
A thrill of fast returning life
Through the languid fern did shoot!

Full soon she grew quite fresh again,
No longer did she burn;
For little daisy’s tears of love
Had saved the dying fern.

LOVELINESS.

ONCE I knew a little girl,
Very plain;
You might try her hair to curl
All in vain;
On her cheek no tint of rose
Paled and blushed, or sought repose;
She was plain.

But the thoughts that through her brain
 Came and went,
As a recompense for pain,
 Angels sent ;
So full many a beauteous thing,
In her young soul blossoming,
 Gave content.

Every thought was full of grace,
 Pure and true,
And in time the homely face
 Loveliest grew ;
With a heavenly radiance bright,
From the soul's reflected light
 Shining through.

So I tell you, little child,
 Plain or poor,
If your thoughts are undefiled,
 You are sure
Of the loveliness of worth ;
And this beauty not of earth
 Will endure.

Mary Lacey.



SUNFLOWER'S LESSON.

A NICE little Sunflower, just over the way,
Is blooming, some four inches tall, I should say;
And what is the reason it blossoms so low?
Has bright little Sunflower forgotten to grow?

Oh, no! but the season is getting quite late;
The frosts will be coming, and so it can't wait;
It seems to be saying, the Sunflower so small,
Better blossom thus low than not blossom at
all.

A lesson I learn from the Sunflower so neat,
That seems to "make glorious the place of His
feet,"
Who called it to bloom; and may you and may I
The place that we fill with our lives beautify.

And this, too, I read in the Sunflower's sweet
face:

To fill well a low place is never disgrace.
Make the most of your time and your talents, tho'
small;
Better bloom in a low place than not bloom at
all.

S. M. Parker.

FAITH AND WORKS.

LITTLE Mollie and Faith, in the arbor at play,
Were making a marigold crown,
When a noise on the lawn made the little ones jump
And scatter the gold flowers down.

And fast toward the bower of blossoms and vines
Came a quadruped, bristling and big,
With sharp-pointed toes, and a queer, grunty nose,
In short, 'twas a *terrible pig*.

“Oh, mercy!” screamed Faith, “where, where
shall we go?
Oh, mamma, oh, papa, come here!
He’s going to tear us to pieces, I know,”
And she jumped up and down in her fear.

But Mollie, more brave, raised the old crooked
gate,
And slammed it quite hard to its place;
Then Faith, kneeling down on the moss-covered
ground,
Toward the sky turned her little pale face.

“Now, Mollie, I’ll pray to our Father in heaven
To save us and drive him away.
That’s the very best thing in the world to be done;
You hold the gate strong while I pray.”

Dear mamma's blue eyes twinkled bright through
her tears,

When the marvellous story was told
Of the prayerful escape of her two little girls
From the monster so savage and bold.

William H. Montgomery.

A LOST CHILD.

"I'm losted! Could you find me, please?"

Poor little frightened baby!

The wind had tossed her golden fleece,
The stones had scratched her dimpled knees;
I stooped, and lifted her with ease,
And softly whispered, "Maybe."

"Tell me your name, my little maid:

I can't find you without it."

"My name is Shiny-eyes," she said.

"Yes; but your last name?" She shook her head:

"Up to my house 'ey never said

A single word about it."

"But, dear," I said, "what is your name?"

"Why, didn't you hear me told you?

Dust Shiny-eyes." A bright thought came:

"Yes, when you're good. But when they blame
You, little one,—is it just the same

When mamma has to scold you?"

“ My mamma never scolds,” she moans,
A little blush ensuing,
“ ’Cept when I’ve been a-frowning stones;
And then she says [the culprit owns],—
‘ Mehitabel Sapphira Jones,
What has you been a-doing?’ ”

Anna E. Burnham.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

HIGH and low the children hunted,
Rosy-cheeked and eager-eyed,
Peeping into every cranny
Where the tiniest mouse might hide,
Finding eggs of blue and yellow,
Crimson, purple, pink, and green;
Such a store of Easter treasures
Surely is not often seen.

But wee Bessie’s eyes were cloudy;
Not a single egg she’d found,
While the rest laid merry claim to
Half-a-dozen, all around.

“ Because, grandma,” Teddy whispered,
“ She is such a little mite
That she couldn’t seem to see them,
Though we put them plain in sight.”

"Never mind;" and grandma, smiling,
 Raised the drooping, golden head,
 Coaxing back the merry dimples,
 "Never mind, my dear," she said.
 "Hark! I heard a biddy cackling,
 There's an Easter-egg for you."
 Waiting for no second telling,
 To the barn the children flew.

Back again, a moment later,
 Rushed the joyous little band;
 "Well, and did you find the egg, dear?"
 Bess unclosed her chubby hand.
 "Didn't biddy know 'twas Easter?"
 Questioned she, in serious way,
 "'Cause, you see, she's laid a white one,
 Dust the same as any day!"

Ada Carleton.

MUS'N'T TOUCH.

THE baby's rosy fingers found
 So oft their curious way
 Among our books and bric-a-brac,
 We had to tell her nay.
 "You *must* not *touch*, remember, dear,"—
 She knew the words full well.

One day, upon a beauteous vase
Her longing glances fell;
She toddled toward the shining thing
She wished to clasp so much,
Then—bravely turned away and sighed,
“Anoder mus’n’t touch.”

Nellie K. Kellogg.

SNOW-FLAKES.

OUT of the bosom of the air,
Out of the cloud-folds of her garments
shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare,
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft, and slow
Descends the snow.

Even as our cloudy fancies take
Suddenly shape in some divine expres-
sion,
Even as the troubled heart doth make
In the white countenance confession,
The troubled sky reveals
The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,
 Slowly in silent syllables recorded;
This is the secret of despair,
 Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,
 Now whispered and revealed
 To wood and field.

BEING A BOY.

ONE of the best things in the world to be is a boy; it requires no experience, though it needs some practice to be a good one. The disadvantage of the position is that he does not last long enough. It is soon over. Just as you get used to being a boy, you have to be something else, with a good deal more work to do and not half so much fun. And yet every boy is anxious to be a man, and is very uneasy with the restrictions that are put upon him as a boy. There are so many bright spots in the life of a farm boy that I sometimes think I should like to live the life over again. I should almost be willing to be a girl if it were not for the chores. There is a great comfort to a boy in the amount of work he can get rid of doing. It is sometimes astonishing how slow he can go on an errand. Perhaps he couldn't explain, himself, why, when he is sent to the neighbor's after yeast, he stops to stone the frogs. He is not exactly

cruel, but he wants to see if he can hit 'em. It is a curious fact about boys, that two will be a great deal slower in doing anything than one. Boys have a great power of helping each other do nothing. But say what you will about the general usefulness of boys, a farm without a boy would very soon come to grief. He is always in demand. In the first place, he is to do all the errands, go to the store, the post-office, and to carry all sorts of messages. He would like to have as many legs as a wheel has spokes, and rotate about in the same way. This he sometimes tries to do, and people who have seen him "turning cart-wheels" along the side of the road have supposed he was amusing himself and idling his time. He was only trying to invent a new mode of locomotion, so that he could economize his legs and do his errands with greater dispatch. Leap-frog is one of his methods of getting over the ground quickly. He has a natural genius for combining pleasure with business.

Charles Dudley Warner.

MY NEIGHBOR'S BABY.

ACROSS in my neighbor's window, with its drapings of satin and lace,
I see, 'neath its flowing ringlets, a baby's innocent face;

His feet, in crimson slippers, are tapping the polished glass ;
And the crowd in the street look upward, and nod
and smile as they pass.

Just here in my cottage window, catching flies in
the sun,
With a patched and faded apron, stands my own
little one ;
His face is as pure and handsome as the baby's
over the way,
And he keeps my heart from breaking, at my toiling
every day.

Sometimes when the day is ended, and I sit in the
dusk to rest,
With the face of my sleeping darling hugged close
to my lonely breast,
I pray that my neighbor's baby may not catch
heaven's roses all,
But that some may crown the forehead of my
loved one as they fall.

And when I draw the stockings from his little
weary feet,
And kiss the rosy dimples in his limbs so round
and sweet,
I think of the dainty garments some little children
wear,
And that my God withholds them from mine so
pure and fair.

May God forgive my envy—I know not what I
said ;

My heart is crushed and troubled,—my neighbor's
boy is dead !

I saw the little coffin as they carried it out to-day:
A mother's heart is breaking in the mansion over
the way.

The light is fair in my window, the flowers bloom
at my door ;

My boy is chasing the sunbeams that dance on the
cottage floor.

The roses of health are blooming on my darling's
cheek to-day,

But the baby is gone from the window of the man-
sion over the way.



THE LIP AND THE HEART.

ONE day, between the Lip and the Heart
A wordless strife arose,
Which was expertest in the art
His purpose to disclose.

The Lip called forth the vassal—Tongue,
And made him vouch—a lie!
The slave his servile anthem sung,
And braved the listening sky.

The Heart to speak in vain essayed,
 Nor could his purpose reach—
 His will, nor voice, nor tongue obeyed,
 His silence was his speech.

Mark thou their difference, child of earth!
 While each performs his part,
 Not all the Lip can speak is worth
 The silence of the Heart.

John Quincy Adams.



WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, BABY.

“WHERE did you come from, baby dear?”

“Out of the everywhere into the here.”

“Where did you get your eyes so blue?”

“Out of the sky as I came through.”

“What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?”

“Some of the starry spikes left in.”

“Where did you get that little tear?”

“I found it waiting when I got here.”

“What makes your forehead so smooth and high?”

“A soft hand stroked it as I went by.”

“What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?”

“Something better than any one knows.”

“ Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss ?”

“ Three angels gave me at once a kiss.”

“ Where did you get that pearly ear ?”

“ God spoke and it came out to hear.”

“ Where did you get those arms and hands ?”

“ Love made itself into hooks and bands.”

“ Feet, whence did you come, you darling things ?”

“ From the same body as the cherubs’ wings.”

“ How did they all just come to be you ?”

“ God thought about me, and so I grew.”

“ But how did you come to us, my dear ?”

“ God thought about you, and so I am here.”

George Macdonald.

AT THE PARTY.

HALF-A-DOZEN children

At our house!

Half-a-dozen children

Quiet as a mouse!

Quiet as a moonbeam—

You could hear a pin,—

Waiting for the party

To begin.

Such a flood of flounces—

Oh, dear me!

Such a surge of sashes—

Like a silken sea.

Little eyes demurely

Cast upon the ground,

Little airs and graces

All around.

High time for that party

To begin!

To sit so any longer

Were a sort of sin;

As if you weren't acquainted

With society.

What a thing to tell of

That would be!

Up spoke a little lady

Aged five:

“I've tumbled up my over-dress,

Sure as I'm alive!

My dress came from Paris—

We sent to Worth for it;

Mother says she calls it

Such a fit!”

Quick there piped another

Little voice:

“I didn't send for dresses,

Though I had my choice;

I have got a doll that
Came from Paris too;
It can walk and talk as
Well as you!"

Still, till now, there sat one
Little girl;
Simple as a snowdrop,
Without flounce or curl.
Modest as a primrose,
Soft, plain hair brushed back,
But the color of her dress was
Black—all black.

Swift she glanced around with
Sweet surprise ;
Bright and grave the look that
Widened in her eyes.
To entertain the party
She must do her share.
As if God had sent her
Stood she there ;

Stood a minute, thinking,
With crossed hands,
How she best might meet the
Company's demands.

Grave and sweet the purpose
To the child's voice given :

" *I* have a little brother
Gone to heaven!"

On the little party
Dropped a spell ;
All the little flounces
Rustled where they fell ;
But the modest maiden
In her mourning gown,
Unconscious as a flower,
Looketh down.

Quick my heart besought her,
Silently :
“ Happy little maiden,
Give, oh, give to me
The highness of thy courage,
The sweetness of thy grace,
To speak a large word in a
Little place.”
Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward.



THE LITTLE ORATOR.

(Written for Ed. Everett, and recited by him in childhood.)

PRAY, how should I, a little lad,
In speaking make a figure ?
You're only joking, I'm afraid,—
Do wait till I am bigger.

But since you wish to hear my part,
And urge me to begin it,
I 'll strive for praise, with all my heart,
Though small the hope to win it.

I'll tell a tale, how Farmer John
A little roan colt bred, sir,
And every night and every morn .
He watered and he fed, sir.

Said Neighbor Joe to Farmer John,
"Aren't you a silly dolt, sir,
To spend such time and care upon
A little useless colt, sir?"

Said Farmer John to Neighbor Joe,
"I'll bring my little roan up,
Not for the good he now can do,
But will do when he's grown up."

The moral you can well espy,
To keep the tale from spoiling ;
The little colt, you think, is I,—
I know it by your smiling.

And now, my friends, please to excuse
My lisping and my stammers ;
I, for this once, have done my best,
And so—I'll make my manners.

Thaddeus M. Harris.

THE LITTLE LIGHT.

THE light shone dim in the headland,
For the storm was raging high ;
I shaded my eyes from the inner glare,
And gazed on the west, gray sky.
It was dark and lowering ; on the sea
The waves were booming loud,
And the snow and the piercing winter sleet
Wove over all a shroud.

“ God pity the men on the sea to-night ! ”
I said to my little ones,
And we shuddered as we heard afar
The sound of minute-guns.
My husband came in, in his fishing coat
(He was wet and cold that night),
And he said, “ There’ll lots of ships go down
On the headland rocks to-night.”

“ Let the lamp burn all night, mother,”
Cried little Mary then ;
“ ’Tis but a little light, but still
It might save drowning men.”
“ Oh, nonsense ! ” cried her father (he
Was tired and cross that night),
“ The headland lighthouse is enough.”
And he put out the light.

That night, on the rocks below us,
A noble ship went down,
But one was saved from the ghastly wreck,
The rest were left to drown.
“We steered by a little light,” he said,
“Till we saw it sink from view:
If they’d only ’a left that light all night
My mates might have been here too!”

Then little Mary sobbed aloud,
Her father blushed for shame;
“’Twas our light that you saw,” he said,
“And I’m the one to blame.”
’Twas a little light—how small a thing!—
And trifling was its cost,
Yet for want of it a ship went down,
And a hundred souls were lost.

THE WISH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE flowers, one day, amid the scented air,
In turn confessed the fate which they would deem
Most suited to adorn their beauty fair.
A saucy Rosebud, wooed of sunlit beam,
Spoke first: “Sisters,” she said, “it is my dream
To see the world in all its proud display
Of kingly court, of feast and pageant gay.”

Sad looked the Asphodel, and from her breast
She heaved low sighs that like a dirge soft spread
In music round : “ Methinks it were more blest
In waxen hand to lie, and perfume shed
Around the form of the beloved dead.

What fate more meet than by sweet-scented sighs
With weeping mourners’ heart to sympathize ?”

Next rose the Daisy, in her pink-fringed gown :
“ I wish,” she lisped, “ to be the children’s flower.”
On hearing this the Rose looked scornful down,
And made reply : “ Oh, well, *you* have no dower
Of scent or beauty to adorn the bower.”

“ I know,” said the Pearl, while she on Kingcup
leant,

“ That simple joys give simple hearts content.”

“ And I,” chimed in the blue Forget-me-not,

“ The pledge would be ’twixt parted friend and
friend.”

The Poppy woke and shook her drowsy head :

“ I’d bear to pain the seeds of sleep,” she said.

With lips dew kissed, now spake the Lily maid

Sweet words that fell like snowflakes on the air :

“ My wish would be to spring ’neath cloister shade,

And soon be placed by nun, with skilful care,

In shrine at Mary’s feet, to linger there.”

Then cried the flowers, as round their queen they
pressed :

“ O Vestal Lily, thou hast chosen best !”

THE GRAY SWAN.

“OH, tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
 A-sailing with your ship?”
The sailor’s eyes were dim with dew,—
“Your little lad, your Elihu?”
 He said with trembling lip,—
 “What little lad? what ship?”

“What little lad! As if there could be
Another such a one as he!
 What little lad, do you say?
Why, Elihu, that took to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee!
 It was just the other day
 The *Gray Swan* sailed away.”

“The other day?” The sailor’s eyes
Stood open with a great surprise,—
 “The other day? the *Swan*?”
His heart began in his throat to rise.
“Ay, ay, sir, here in the cupboard lies
 The jacket he had on.”
 “And so your lad is gone?”

“But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?
 I stood on the *Gray Swan*’s deck,

And to that lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off, as it might be, so,
The kerchief from your neck."
"Ay, and he'll bring it back!"

"And did the little lawless lad,
That has made you sick and made you sad,
Sail with the *Gray Swan's* crew?"
"Lawless! The man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had,—
Be sure he sailed with the crew!
What would you have him do?"

"And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign
To say he was alive?"
"Hold! if 'twas wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine,
And could he write from the grave?
Tut, man, what would you have?"

"Gone twenty years—a long, long cruise;
'Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;
But if the lad still live,
And come back home, think you you can
Forgive him?"—"Miserable man,
You're mad as the sea,—you rave,—
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew

'The kerchief. She was wild.

"My God ! my Father ! is it true—

My little lad, my Elihu ?

My blessed boy, my child !

My dead,—my living child !"

Alice Cary.

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through
the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse ;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced through their
heads ;

And mamma in her kerchief and I in my cap
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

'The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below ;

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver so lively and quick
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them by
name :

“ Now, Dasher ! now, Dancer ! now, Prancer and
Vixen !

On, Comet ! on, Cupid ! on, Donner and Blitzen !
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all !”

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the
sky,

So up to the housetop the coursers they flew,
With a sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too ;
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
‘The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound ;

He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and
soot ;

A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his
pack.

His eyes, how they twinkled ! his dimples, how
merry !

His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry ;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the
snow ;

He was chubby and plump—a right jolly old elf—
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself ;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle ;
But I heard him exclaim ere he drove out of sight,
“ Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night ! ”

Clement C. Moore.

LITTLE CHRISTEL.

FRAULEIN, the young schoolmistress, to her pupils
said one day,
“Next week, at Pfingster holiday, King Ludwig
rides this way;
And you will be wise, my little ones, to work with
a will at your tasks,
That so you may answer fearlessly whatever ques-
tion he asks.
It would be a shame too dreadful if the King
should have it to tell
That Hansel missed in his figures, and Peterkin
could not spell.”

“Oho! that never shall happen,” cried Hansel and
Peterkin too;
“We’ll show King Ludwig, when he comes, what
the boys in this school can do.”
“And we,” said Gretchen and Bertha, and all the
fair little maids
Who stood in a row before her, with their hair in
flaxen braids,
“We will pay such good attention to every word
you say
That you shall not be ashamed of us when King
Ludwig rides this way.”

She smiled, the young schoolmistress, to see that
they loved her so,
And with patient care she taught them the things
it was good to know.
Day after day she drilled them till the great day
came at last,
When the heralds going before him blew out their
sounding blast;
And with music, and flying banners, and the clat-
ter of horses' feet,
The King and his troops of soldiers rode down the
village street.

Oh ! the hearts of the eager children beat fast with
joy and fear,
And Fräulein trembled and grew pale as the caval-
cade drew near ;
But she blushed with pride and pleasure when the
lessons came to be heard,
For in all the flock of the boys and girls not one of
them missed a word,
And King Ludwig turned to the teacher with a
smile and a gracious look :
“ It is plain,” said he, “ that your scholars have
carefully conned their book.

“ But now let us ask some questions, to see if they
understand ;”
And he showed to one of the little maids an orange
in his hand.

It was Christel, the youngest sister of the mistress
fair and kind—

A child with a face like a lily, and as lovely and
pure a mind.

“What kingdom does this belong to?” as he
called her to his knee ;

And at once — “The vegetable,” she answered
quietly.

“Good,” said the monarch, kindly, and showed
her a piece of gold :

“Now tell me what this belongs to—the pretty
coin that I hold.”

She touched it with careful finger, for gold was a
metal rare,

And then — “The mineral kingdom,” she answered
with confident air.

“Well done for the little mädchen !” And good
King Ludwig smiled

At Fräulein and her sister, the teacher and the
child.

“Now answer me one more question”—with a
twinkle of fun in his eye :

“What kingdom do I belong to?” For he thought
she would make reply,

“The animal ;” and he meant to ask with a frown
if that was the thing

For a little child like her to say to her lord and
master, the king ?

He knew not the artless wisdom that would set his
wit at naught,
And the little Christel guessed nothing at all of
what was in his thought.

But her glance shot up at the question, and the
brightness in her face,
Like a sunbeam on a lily, seemed to shine all over
the place.

“What kingdom do you belong to?” her innocent
lips repeat ;

“Why, surely, the kingdom of Heaven!” rings out
the answer sweet.

And then for a breathless moment a sudden silence
fell,

And you might have heard the fall of a leaf as they
looked at little Christel.

But it only lasted a moment, then rose as sudden a
shout—

“Well done ! well done for little Christel !” and
the bravos rang about.

For the King in his arms had caught her, to her
wondering shy surprise,

And over and over he kissed her, with a mist of
tears in his eyes.

“May the blessing of God,” he murmured, “for-
ever rest on thy head !

Henceforth, by His grace, my life shall prove the
truth of what thou hast said.”

He gave her the yellow orange and the golden coin
for her own,
And the school had a royal feast that day whose
like they had never known.
To Fräulein, the gentle mistress, he spoke such
words of cheer
That they lightened her anxious labor for many
and many a year.
And because in his heart was hidden the memory
of this thing,
The Lord had a better servant, the people a wiser
king !

Mrs. Mary E. Bradley.



THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SQUIRREL.

THE mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter " little prig ;"
Bun replied,
" You are doubtless very big,

" But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year
And a sphere ;

“ And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I am not as large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.

“ I’ll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all are well and wisely put.
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson.



THE LITTLE LION CHARMER.

OUTSIDE the little village of Katrine,
Just where the country ventures into town,
A circus pitched its tents, and on the green
The canvas pyramids were fastened down.

The night was clear. The moon was climbing
higher ;

The show was over ; crowds were coming out,
When, through the surging mass, the cry of
“ Fire !”

Rose from a murmur to a wild, hoarse shout.

“Fire ! fire !” The crackling flames ran up the
tent,

The shrieks of frightened women filled the air,
The cries of prisoned beasts weird horror lent
To the wild scene of uproar and despair.

A lion’s roar high o’er all the cries !

There is a crash—out into the night
The tawny creature leaps with glowing eyes,
Then stands, defiant, in the fierce red light.

“The lion’s loose ! The lion ! Fly for your lives !”

But deathlike silence falls upon them all,
So paralyzed with fear that no one strives
To make escape, to move, to call !

“A weapon !” “Shoot him !” comes from far out-
side ;

The shout wakes men again to conscious life ;
But as the aim is taken, the ranks divide
To make a passage for the keeper’s wife.

Alone she came, a woman tall and fair,

And hurried on, and near the lion stood ;
“Oh, do not fire !” she cried ; “let no one dare
To shoot my lion—he is tame and good.

“My son ! my son !” she called ; and to her ran
A little child that scarce had seen nine years.

“Play ! play !” she said. Quickly the boy began :
His little flute was heard by awestruck ears.

“Fetch me a cage,” she cried. The men obeyed.

“Now go, my son, and bring the lion here.”

Slowly the child advanced, and piped, and played,

While men and women held their breaths in fear.

Sweetly he played, as though no horrid fate

Could ever harm his sunny little head.

He never paused, or seemed to hesitate,

But went to do the thing his mother said.

The lion hearkened to the sweet, clear sound ;

The anger vanished from his threatening eyes ;

All motionless he crouched upon the ground,

And listened to the silver melodies.

The boy thus reached his side. The beast stirred
not.

The child then backward walked, and played
again,

Till, moving softly, slowly from the spot,

The lion followed the familiar strain.

The cage is waiting—wide its open door—

And toward it, cautiously, the child retreats.

But see ! The lion, restless grown once more,

Is lashing with his tail in angry beats.

The boy, advancing, plays again the lay.

Again the beast, remembering the refrain,

Follows him on, until in this dread way

The cage is reached, and in it go the twain.

At once the boy springs out, the door makes fast,
Then leaps with joy to reach his mother's side ;
Her praise alone, of all that crowd so vast,
Has power to thrill his little heart with pride.

Harriet S. Fleming.



GRANDMA'S ANGEL.

“ MAMMA said : ‘ Little one, go and see
If grandmother's ready to come to tea.’
I knew I mustn't disturb her, so
I stepped as gently along, tiptoe,
And stood a moment to take a peep—
And there was grandmother fast asleep !

“ I knew it was time for her to wake,
I thought I'd give her a little shake,
Or tap at her door, or softly call ;
But I hadn't the heart for that at all—
She looked so sweet and so quiet there,
Lying back in her high arm-chair,
With her dear white hair, and a little smile,
That means she is loving you all the while.

“ I didn't make a speck of a noise ;
I knew that she was dreaming of the little boys
And girls who lived with her so long ago
And then went to heaven—she told me so.

“ I went up close, but I didn’t speak
One word, but I gave her on her cheek
The softest bit of a little kiss,
Just in a whisper, and then I said this :
‘ Grandmother, dear, it’s time for tea.’

“ She opened her eyes and looked at me,
And said : ‘ Why, Pet, I have just now dreamed
Of a little angel who came and seemed
To kiss me lovingly on my face.’
She pointed right at the very place.

“ I never told her ’twas only me,
I took her hand and we went to tea.”

St. Nicholas.



THE DISCONTENTED BUTTERCUP.

DOWN in a field, one day in June,
The flowers all bloomed together,
Save one, who tried to hide herself,
And drooped, that pleasant weather.

A robin who had soared too high,
And felt a little lazy,
Was resting near a buttercup
Who wished she were a daisy,

For daisies grow so trig and tall ;
She always had a passion
For wearing frills about her neck
In just the daisies' fashion.

And buttercups must always be
The same old tiresome color,
While daisies dress in gold and white,
Although their gold is duller.

"Dear robin," said this sad young flower,
"Perhaps you'd not mind trying
To find a nice white frill for me,
Some day, when you are flying?"

"You silly thing!" the robin said ;
"I think you must be crazy !
I'd rather be my honest self
Than any made-up daisy.

"You're nicer in your own bright gown ;
The little children love you ;
Be the best buttercup you can,
And think no flower above you.

"Though swallows leave me out of sight,
We'd better keep our places ;
Perhaps the world would all go wrong
With one too many daisies.

“ Look bravely up into the sky,
And be content with knowing
That God wished for a buttercup
Just here where you are growing.”

Sarah A. Jewett.

THE VIOLET.

DOWN in a green and shady bed
A modest violet grew ;
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower,
Its colors bright and fair ;
It might have graced a rosy bower
Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,
In modest tints arrayed ;
And there diffused a sweet perfume
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flower to see,
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

Jane Taylor.

WHAT THE WINDS BRING.

WHICH is the wind that brings the cold ?

The North-wind, Freddy, and all the snow ;
And the sheep will scamper into the fold,
When the North begins to blow.

Which is the wind that brings the heat ?

The South-wind, Katy ; and corn will grow,
And peaches redden for you to eat,
When the South begins to blow.

Which is the wind that brings the rain ?

The East-wind, Arty ; and farmers know
That cows come shivering up the lane
When the East begins to blow.

Which is the wind that brings the flowers ?

The West-wind, Bessy ; and soft and low,
The birdies sing in the summer hours
When the West begins to blow.

Edmund Clarence Stedman.

PAPA'S LETTER.

I WAS sitting in my study,
Writing letters, when I heard,
“ Please, dear mamma, Mary told me
Mamma mus'n't be 'isturbed.

“ But I’se tired of the kitty,
Want some ozzer fing to do.
Witing letters, is ’ou, mamma?
Tan’t I wite a letter too?”

“ Not now, darling, mamma’s busy;
Run and play with kitty, now.”

“ No, no, mamma; me wite letter,
Tan if ’ou will show me how.”

I would paint my darling’s portrait
As his sweet eyes searched my face—
Hair of gold and eyes of azure,
Form of childish, witching grace.

But the eager face was clouded,
As I slowly shook my head,
Till I said, “ I’ll make a letter
Of you, darling boy, instead.”

So I parted back the tresses
From his forehead high and white,
And a stamp in sport I pasted
’Mid its waves of golden light.

Then I said, “ Now, little letter,
Go away and bear good news.”
And I smiled as down the staircase
Clattered loud the little shoes.

Leaving me, the darling hurried
Down to Mary in his glee,
“Mamma’s witing lots of letters;
I’s a letter, Mary,—see!”

No one heard the little prattler,
As once more he climbed the stair,
Reached his little cap and tippet,
Standing on the entry stair.

No one heard the front door open,
No one saw the golden hair,
As it floated o’er his shoulders
In the crisp October air.

Down the street the baby hastened
Till he reached the office door.
“I’s a letter, Mr. Postman;
Is there room for any more?”

“’Cause dis letter’s doin’ to papa,
Papa lives with God, ’ou know,
Mamma sent me for a letter,
Does ’ou fink ’at I tan do?”

But the clerk in wonder answered,
“Not to-day, my little man.”
“Den I’ll find anozzer office,
“Cause I must do if I tan.”

Fain the clerk would have detained him,
But the pleading face was gone,
And the little feet were hastening—
By the busy crowd swept on.

Suddenly the crowd was parted,
People fled to left and right,
As a pair of maddened horses
At the moment dashed in sight.

No one saw the baby figure—
No one saw the golden hair,
Till a voice of frightened sweetness
Rang out on the autumn air.

'Twas too late—a moment only
Stood the beauteous vision there,
Then the little face lay lifeless,
Covered o'er with golden hair.

Reverently they raised my darling,
Brushed away the curls of gold,
Saw the stamp upon the forehead,
Growing now so icy cold.

Not a mark the face disfigured,
Showing where a hoof had trod;
But the little life was ended—
“Papa's letter” was with God.

ST. AGNES' SHRINE.

WHILE before St. Agnes' shrine
 Knelt a true knight's lady-love,
From the wars of Palestine
 Came a gentle carrier-dove.

Round his neck a silken string
 Fastened words the warrior writ;
At her call he stooped his wing,
 And upon her finger lit.

She, like one enchanted, pored
 O'er the contents of the scroll—
For that lady loved her lord
 With a pure, devoted soul.

To her heart her dove she drew,
 While she traced the burning line;
Then away his minion flew
 Back to sainted Palestine.

To and fro, from hand to hand
 Came and went a carrier-dove,
Till throughout the Holy Land
 War resigned his sword to Love.

Swift her dove, on wings of light,
 Brought the news from Palestine,
And the lady her true knight
 Wedded at St. Agnes' shrine.

Geo. P. Morris.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

THERE is a reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

“Shall I have nought that is fair to see;
Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again.”

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
And kissed their tremulous leaves;
It was for the Lord of paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

“My Lord has need of these flowers gay,”
The reaper said, and smiled;
“Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

“They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints upon their garments white
These sacred blossoms wear.”

And the mother gave in tears and pain
The flowers she most did love;
But she knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

Longfellow.

THE BOY OF THE ARCTIC.

When the American steamship Arctic came in collision with another steamship at sea, in the autumn of 1854, there was a youth, named Stuart Holland, stationed at the gun, to keep firing it, in the hope of attracting the attention of vessels at a distance, that they might come to the relief of the sinking vessel. Nearly all the crew deserted, leaving the captain and most of the passengers without a boat. But Stuart Holland kept at his post, and sank with the ship. "I saw him," says an eyewitness, "in the very act of firing, as the vessel disappeared."

THE thick fog baffled vision,
But daylight lingered yet,
When two ships, in collision,
Upon the ocean met;
The Arctic shook and reeled;
A hole in her fore-quarter
Let in a rush of water:
The good ship's doom was sealed.

And there were men and women
Crowded upon the deck;
And there were frightened seamen
Rushing to leave the wreck!

In vain the captain shouted;
The craven crew have left him,
Of every boat bereft him:
Destruction is undoubted.

But, hark! a gun is pealing
Fast from that vessel's side;
One true heart is revealing
That Duty doth abide
O'er Death and all his host.
The boy stands loading, firing,
Unaided and untiring,
Nor thinks he of inquiring
If he may quit his post.

The ship sinks lower, lower,—
She's past her water-line;
The climbing surges throw her
Deeper within the brine.
Foam-wreaths her last plank crown!
But, as the wild waves won her,
There stood the youthful gunner,
One last peal sent from on her,—
Then with his gun went down!

Osborne.



THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

“WILL you walk into my parlor?” said the spider to the fly;

“’Tis the prettiest little parlor that ever you did spy;

The way into the parlor is up a winding stair,
And I have many a curious thing to show when
you are there!”

“O, no, no!” said the little fly; “to ask me is in
vain,

For who goes up your winding stair can ne’er come
down again.”

“I’m sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring
up so high:

Will you rest upon my little bed?” said the spider to the fly;

“There are pretty curtains drawn around, the
sheets are fine and thin,
And if you like to rest awhile, I’ll snugly tuck you
in.”

“O, no, no!” said the little fly; “for I’ve often
heard it said,

They never, never wake again, who sleep upon your
bed.”

Said the cunning spider to the fly, “Dear friend,
what can I do

To prove the warm affection I’ve always felt for
you?

I have, within my pantry, good store of all that's nice;

I'm sure you're very welcome,—will you please to take a slice?"

"O, no, no!" said the little fly; "kind sir, that cannot be;

I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not wish to see."

"Sweet creature," said the spider, "you're witty and you're wise;

How handsome are your gaudy wings, how brilliant are your eyes!

I have a little looking-glass upon my parlor shelf: If you'll step in one moment, dear, you shall behold yourself."

"I thank you, gentle sir," she said, "for what you're pleased to say,

And, bidding you good-morrow now, I'll call another day."

The spider turned him round about, and went into his den,

For well he knew the silly fly would soon come back again.

So he wove a subtle web in a little corner sly,
And set his table ready to dine upon the fly.

Then he came out to his door again, and merrily
did sing,
“Come hither, hither, pretty fly, with the pearl
and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple, there’s a crest
upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine
are dull as lead.”

Alas! alas! how very soon this silly little fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly
flitting by!
With buzzing wings, she hung aloft, then near and
nearer drew,
Thinking only of her brilliant eyes, and green and
purple hue;
Thinking only of her crested head, poor foolish
thing! At last
Up jumped the cunning spider, and fiercely held
her fast.

He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dis-
mal den,
Within his little parlor,—but she ne’er came out
again!
And now, my dear young pupils, who may this
story read,
To idle, silly, flattering words, I pray you ne’er
give heed;

Unto an evil counsellor close heart, and ear, and
eye,
And take a lesson from this tale of the spider and
the fly.

Mary Howitt.

A HINDOO'S PARADISE.

A HINDOO died,—a happy thing to do
When twenty years united to a shrew.
Released he hopefully for entrance cries
Before the gates of Brahma's paradise.
“Hast been through purgatory?” Brahma said.

“I have been married,”—and he hung his head.
“Come in, come in, and welcome, too, my son!
Marriage and purgatory are as one.”
In bliss extreme he entered heaven's door,
And knew the peace he ne'er had known before.

He scarce had entered in the garden fair,
Another Hindoo asked admission there.
The self-same question Brahma asked again;
“Hast been through purgatory?” “No—what
then?”
“Thou canst not enter!” did the God reply.

“He who went in was there no more than I.”

“All that is true, but he has married been,
And so on earth has suffered for all sin.”

“Married? ’Tis well; for I have been married
twice!”

“Begone! We’ll have no fools in Paradise.”



THE FOOL’S PRAYER.

THE royal feast was done; the King
Sought some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried, “Sir Fool,
Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!”

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before;
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the painted grin he wore.

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
Upon the monarch’s silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: “O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

“No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool;
The rod must heal the sin: but Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

“ ’Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
’Tis by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

“ These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heart-strings of a friend.

“ The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung!
The word we had not sense to say—
Who knows how grandly it had rung!

“ Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripes must cleanse them all;
But for our blunders—oh, in shame
Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

“ Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave, and scourge the tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!”

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his gardens cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
“ Be merciful to me, a fool!”

Ed. R. Sill.

THE BIRD AND THE BABY.

WHAT does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
“Let me fly,” says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.”
“Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.”
So it rests a little longer,
Then it flies away.

What does little baby say
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
“Let me rise and fly away.”
“Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.”

Tennyson.

THE WIND AND THE MOON.

SAID the Wind to the Moon, “I will blow you out;
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about—
I hate to be watched; I’ll blow you out.”

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon,
 So deep
 On a heap
 Of cloudless sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
 On high,
 In the sky,
 With her ghost eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain;
Said the Wind, "I'll blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim:
 "With my sledge,
 And my wedge,
 I have knocked off her edge!
If only I blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and he blew, and she thinned to a thread;
 "One puff
 More's enough
 To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glum will go the thread."

He blew a great blast, and the thread was gone
 In the air;
 Nowhere
 Was a moonbeam bare;
 Far off and harmless the sky stars shone—
 Sure and certain the Moon was gone!

The Wind he took to his revels once more;
 On down
 In town,
 Like a merry-mad clown,
 He leaped and halloed with whistle and roar:
 "What's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage—he danced and blew;
 But in vain
 Was the pain
 Of his bursting brain;
 For still broader the moon-scrap grew,
 The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew—till she filled the night,
 And shone
 On her throne
 In the sky alone,
 A matchless, wonderful, silvery light,
 Radiant and lovely, the queen of night.

Said the Wind: "What a marvel of power am I?
With my breath,
Good faith,
I blew her to death—
First blew her away right out of the sky—
Then blew her in; what strength have I?"

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair;
For high
In the sky,
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

George Macdonald.

THE PET LAMB.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink;
I heard a voice: it said, "Drink, pretty creature,
drink!"

And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
A snow-white mountain lamb, with a maiden at its
side.

No other sheep were near; the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone;

With one knee on the grass did the little maiden
 kneel,
While to that mountain lamb she gave its evening
 meal.

“Rest, little one,” she said; “hast thou forgot the
 day
When my father found thee first, in a place far
 away?
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned
 by none,
And thy mother from thy side forevermore was
 gone.

“Thou know’st that twice a day I have brought
 thee in this can
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran;
And twice, too, in the day, when the ground is wet
 with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk—warm milk it is,
 and new.

“Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they
 are now;
Then I’ll yoke thee to my cart, like a pony in the
 plow:
My playmate thou shalt be; and when the wind
 is cold,
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be
 thy fold.

“ See, here thou need’st not fear the raven in the
sky;

Both night and day thou’rt safe—our cottage is
hard by.

Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at thy chain?
Sleep, and at break of day I’ll come to thee again.”

Wordsworth.

AUCTIONING OFF THE BABY.

WHAT am I offered for Baby?

Dainty, dimpled, and sweet
From the curls above his forehead
To the beautifully rosy feet;
From the tips of the wee pink fingers
To the light of the clear brown eye,
What am I offered for Baby?
Who’ll buy? who’ll buy? who’ll buy?

What am I offered for Baby?

“A shopful of sweets?” Ah, no!
That’s too much beneath his value
Who is sweetest of all below!
The naughty, beautiful darling!
One kiss from his rosy mouth
Is better than all the dainties
Of East, or West, or South!

What am I offered for Baby ?

“A pile of gold ?” Ah, dear,
Your gold is too hard and heavy
To purchase my brightness here.
Would the treasures of all the mountains,
Far in the wonderful lands,
Be worth the clinging and clasping
Of these dear little peach-bloom hands?

So, what am I offered for Baby ?

“A rope of diamonds?” Nay,
If your brilliants were larger and brighter
Than stars in the Milky Way,
Would they ever be half so precious
As the light of those lustrous eyes,
Still full of the heavenly glory
They brought from beyond the skies?

Then, what am I offered for Baby ?

“A heart full of love and a kiss ?”
Well, if anything ever could tempt me,
'Twould be such an offer as this!
But how can I know if your loving
Is tender, and true, and divine
Enough to repay what I'm giving
In selling this sweetheart of mine ?

So we will not sell the Baby !

Your gold and gems and stuff,
Were they ever so rare and precious,
Would never be half enough !

For what would we care, my dearies,
What glory the world put on
If our beautiful darling were—going ;
If our beautiful darling were—gone!

PICTURES OF MEMORY.

AMONG the beautiful pictures
That hang on memory's wall
Is one of a dim old forest
That seemeth best of all.

I once had a little brother,
With eyes that were dark and deep ;
In the lap of that dim old forest
He lieth in peace asleep.

Light as the down of the thistle,
Free as the winds that blow,
We roved there the beautiful summers,
The summers of long ago ;

But his feet on the hills grew weary,
And one of the autumn eves,
I made for my little brother
A bed of the yellow leaves.

Sweetly his pale arms folded
My neck in a meek embrace,
As the light of immortal beauty
Silently covered his face ;

And when the arrows of sunset
 Lodged in the tree-tops bright,
 He fell, in his saint-like beauty,
 Asleep by the gates of light.

Therefore, of all the pictures
 That hang on memory's wall,
 The one of the dim old forest
 Seemeth the best of all.

Alice Cary.



THE FIRST SNOW-FALL.

THE snow had begun in the gloaming,
 And busily all the night
 Had been heaping field and highway
 With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
 Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
 And the poorest twig on the elm tree
 Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara*
 Came Chanticleer's muffled crow ;
 The stiff rails were softened to swan's down,
 And still fluttered down the snow.

* A variety of marble very pure and white.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,*
Where a little headstone stood,
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All Father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud-like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall."

* A cemetery near Boston.

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

James Russell Lowell.

THE CHICKEN'S MISTAKE.

A LITTLE downy chick one day
Asked leave to go on the water,
Where she saw a duck with her brood at play
Swimming and splashing about her.

Indeed she began to peep and cry
When her mother wouldn't let her,
“If the ducks can swim there, why can't I?
Are they any bigger or better?”

Then the old hen answered, “Listen to me,
And hush your foolish talking.
Just look at your feet, and you will see
They were only made for walking.”

But chicky wistfully eyed the brook,
And didn't half believe her,
For she seemed to say, by a knowing look,
Such stories couldn't deceive her.

And as her mother was scratching the ground,
She muttered lower and lower,
“I know I can go there and not be drowned,
And so I think I’ll show her.”

Then she made a plunge where the stream was
deep
And saw too late her blunder;
For she had hardly time to peep,
When her foolish head went under.

And now I hope her fate will show
The child my story reading,
That those who are older sometimes know
What you will do well in heeding.

So each content in his place should dwell,
And envy not his brother;
For any part that is acted well
Is just as good as another.

For we all have our proper spheres below,
And this is a truth worth knowing;
You will come to grief if you try to go
Where you never were made for going.

Phæbe Cary.

LETTING THE OLD CAT DIE.

Not long ago I wandered near
A playground in the wood ;
And there heard words from a youngster's lips,
That I never quite understood.

"Now let the old cat die !" he laughed ;
I saw him give a push,
Then gaily scamper away as he spied
A face peep over the bush.

But what he pushed, or where he went,
I could not well make out,
On account of the thicket of bending boughs
That bordered the place about.

"The little villain has stoned a cat,
Or hung it upon a limb,
And left it to die all alone," I said,
"But I'll play the mischief with him."

I forced my way through the bending boughs,
The poor old cat to seek,
And what did I find but a swinging child,
With her bright hair brushing her cheek !

Her bright hair floated to and fro,
Her little red dress flashed by ;
But the loveliest thing of all, I thought,
Was the gleam of her laughing eye.

Swinging and swinging, back and forth,
With the rose-light in her face,
She seemed like a bird and flower in one,
And the forest her native place.

“Steady! I’ll send you up, my child,”
But she stopped me with a cry,
“Go ’way, go ’way! don’t touch me, please;
I’m letting the old cat die.”

“You’re letting him die!” I cried, aghast,
“Why, where’s the cat, my dear?”
And lo, the laugh that filled the wood
Was a thing for the birds to hear.

“Why, don’t you know?” said the little maid,
The sparkling, beautiful elf,
“That we call it letting the old cat die
When the swing stops all by itself.”

Then swinging and swinging, and looking back,
With the merriest look in her eye,
She bade me good-bye, and I left her alone,
“Letting the old cat die.”



THE KAISER'S FEAST.

THE Kaiser feasted in his hall:
The red wine mantled high;
Banners were trembling on the wall
To the peals of minstrelsy;
And many a gleam and sparkle came
From the armor hung around,
As it caught the glance of the torch's flame,
O'er the earth with palm-boughs crowned.

Why fell there silence on the chord
Beneath the harper's hand?
And suddenly from that rich board
Why rose the wassail band?
The strings were hushed: the knights made way
For the queenly mother's tread.
As up the hall, in dark array,
Two fair-haired boys she led.

She led them e'en to the Kaiser's place,
And still before him stood;
Till, with strange wonder o'er his face,
Flushed the proud warrior-blood;
And "Speak, my mother! speak!" he cried:
"Wherefore this mourning vest?
And the clinging children by thy side
In weeds of sadness drest?"

“ Well may a mourning vest be mine
And theirs, my son, my son!
Look at the features of thy line
In each fair little one.
Though grief a while within their eyes
Hath tamed the dancing glee,
Yet there thine own quick spirit lies,—
Thy brother’s children see!

“ And where is he, thy brother?—where?
He in thy home that grew,
And smilingly, with floating hair,
Ever to greet thee flew?
How would his arms thy neck intwine,
His fond lips press thy brow!
My son! oh, call these orphans thine!
Thou hast no brother now.

“ What! from their gentle eyes doth nought
Speak of thy childhood’s hours,
And smite thee with a tender thought
Of thy dead father’s towers?
Kind was thy boyish heart, and true,
When reared together there:
Through the old woods like fawns ye flew.
Where is thy brother?—where?

“ Well didst thou love him then, and he
Still at thy side was seen.
How is it that such things can be
As though they ne’er had been?

Evil was this world's breath, which came
Between the good and brave:
Now must the tears of grief and shame
Be offered to the grave.

“And let them, let them there be poured!
Though all unfelt below,
Thine own wrung heart, to love restored,
Shall soften as they flow.
Oh! Death is mighty to make peace:
Now bid his work be done;
So many an inward strife shall cease;
Take, take these babes, my son!”

His eye was dimmed; the strong man shook
With feelings long suppressed:
Up in his arms the boys he took,
And strained them to his breast.
And a shout from all in the royal hall
Burst forth to hail the sight;
And eyes were wet midst the brave that met
At the Kaiser's feast that night.



PASSING AWAY--A DREAM.

WAS it the chime of a tiny bell,
That came so sweet to my dreaming ear—
Like the silvery tones of a fairy's shell,
That he winds on the beach so mellow and clear,

When the winds and the waves lie together asleep,
And the Moon and the Fairy are watching the deep,
 She dispensing her silvery light,
 And he, his notes as silvery quite,
While the boatman listens and ships his oar,
To catch the music that comes from the shore—
 Hark! the notes on my ear that play,
 Are set to words:—as they float, they say,
 “Passing away! passing away!”

But no; it was not a fairy's shell
 Blown on the beach so mellow and clear;
Nor was it the tongue of a silver bell,
 Striking the hour, that filled my ear,
As I lay in my dream; yet was it a chime
That told of the flow of the stream of time.
For a beautiful clock from the ceiling hung,
And a plump little girl for a pendulum swung
(As you've sometimes seen, in a little ring
That hangs in his cage, a Canary Bird swing;)
 And she held to her bosom a budding bouquet,
 And as she enjoyed it, she seemed to say,
 “Passing away! passing away!”

O how bright were the wheels that told
 Of the lapse of time, as they moved round slow!
And the hands, as they swept o'er the dial of gold,
 Seemed to point to the girl below.
And lo! she had changed:—in a few short hours
Her bouquet had become a garland of flowers,

That she held in her outstretched hands, and flung
This way and that, as she dancing swung
In the fulness of grace and of womanly pride,
That told me she soon was to be a bride;—
Yet then, when expecting her happiest day,
In the same sweet voice I heard her say,
“Passing away! passing away!”

While I gazed at that fair one's cheek, a shade
Of thought, or care, stole softly over,
Like that by a cloud in a summer's day made,
Looking down on a field of blossoming clover.
The rose yet lay on her cheek, but its flush
Had something lost of its brilliant blush;
And the light in her eye, and the light on the
wheels,
That marched so slowly round above her,
Was a little dimmed,—as when Evening steals
Upon Noon's hot face. Yet one couldn't but
love her,
For she looked like a mother whose first babe lay
Rocked on her breast as she swung all day;
And she seemed, in the same silver tone, to say,
“Passing away! passing away!”

While yet I looked, what a change there came!
Her eye was quenched, and her cheek was wan:
Stooping and staffed was her withered frame,
Yet just as busily swung she on;

The garland beneath her had fallen to dust,
The wheels above her were eaten with rust,
The hands, that o'er the dial swept,
Grew crooked and tarnished, but on they kept,
And still there came that silver tone
From the shrivelled lips of the toothless crone,—
 (Let me never forget till my dying day
 The tone or the burden of her lay,)
 “Passing away! passing away!”

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

FEAR was within the tossing bark
 When stormy winds grew loud,
And waves came rolling high and dark,
 And the tall mast was bowed.

And men stood breathless in their dread,
 And baffled in their skill;
But One was there, who rose and said
 To the wild sea, Be still!

And the wind ceased—it ceased! That word
 Passed through the gloomy sky;
The troubled billows knew their Lord,
 And fell beneath His eye.

And slumber settled on the deep,
And silence on the blast;
They sank, as flowers that fold to sleep
When sultry day is past.

O Thou ! that in its wildest hour
Didst rule the tempest's mood,
Send thy meek spirit forth in power,
Soft on our souls to brood !

Thou that didst bow the billows' pride
Thy mandate to fulfil !
Oh, speak to passion's raging tide,
Speak, and say, Peace be still !



THERE IS NO DEATH.

THERE is no death ! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore ;
And bright in heaven's jewelled crown
They shine forever more.

There is no death ! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain, or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear,
The leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air.

There is no death ! The leaves may fall,
The flowers may fall and pass away ;
They only wait through wintry hours
The coming of the May.

There is no death ! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread,
He bears our best-loved things away ;
And then we call them " dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate ;
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers ;
Transported into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

The bird-like voice, whose joyous tones
Make glad these scenes of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song
Amid the tree of life.

And when he sees a smile too bright
Or heart too pure for taint and vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

Born unto that undying life,
They leave us but to come again ;
With joy we welcome them—the same,
Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread :
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there are no dead !

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

SCANDAL.

A WOMAN to the holy father went,
(Confession of her sin was her intent,)
And owned that she a tale-bearer had been,
And bore a bit of scandal up and down
To all the long-tongued gossips in the town.
He told her 'this offence was very grave,
And that to do fit penance she must go
Out by the wayside where the thistles grow,
And gathering the largest, ripest one,
Scatter its seeds, and that when this was done,
She must come back again another day
To tell him his commands she did obey.
The woman, thinking this was penance light,
Hastened to do his will that very night,
Feeling right glad she had escaped so well.
Next day but one she went the priest to tell.

The priest sat still and heard her story through,
Then said, "There's something still for you to do;
Those little thistle-seeds which you have sown,
I bid you go re-gather every one."

The woman said: "But, father, 'twould be vain
To try to gather up those seeds again;
The winds have scattered them both far and wide,
Over the meadowed vale and mountain-side."

The father answered, "Now I hope from this
The lesson I have taught you will not miss;
You cannot gather back the scattered seeds,
Which far and wide will grow to noxious weeds,
Nor can the mischief once by scandal sown
By any penance be again undone."

Mary E. C. Johnson.

HATEM TOI.

HATEM TOI possessed a mare,
Fleet of foot, of lineage rare,
Black as midnight, strong of limb,
Fond as child could be of him;
Every sheik and chieftain there
Envied Hatem Toi his mare.

Sullah Beg the mare admired;
Sullah Beg the mare desired;
Offered for her shining gold,
Many camels, goats from fold,

All the greed of man could stir,
Should her owner part with her.

Came reply: "I may not sell
Her who serves my need so well.
Born and bred within my tent,
Going where her master went,
Children's playmate, master's friend,
Let her be so to the end."

Sullah Beg, with anger hot,
Glanced a while, but answered not;
Turned on heel and strode away,
Where was tethered courser gray,
And, in mounting, muttered, "She,
Spite her owner, mine shall be."

Hatem Toi a journey made
From the friendly palm-tree's shade,
Through the barren rocks and sand,
Speeding o'er the higher land,
Free from trouble, grief, or care,
Mounted on his matchless mare.

Moving merrily, mile on mile,
Came he to a deep defile,
Where an aged wretch he found
Prone, exhausted on the ground;
And, dismounting, asked what aid
In his need could best be made.

Quoth the stranger: "Pass, and leave
One whose dying none shall grieve.
Started I this morn to go
To yon fertile plain below;
But my feet have failed me. I,
Old and wearied, here must die."

"Nay!" cried Hatem. "I am young:
Age has not my limbs unstrung.
Let me lift you on my mare,
Who can well the burden bear.
Light and easy you shall ride,
While I careful walk beside."

Thanked him then the stranger, and
Helped to seat by kindly hand,
Grasped the reins and reined the mare,
Till she reared and pawed the air;
Lashed her sudden till she leapt,
And away from Hatem swept.

Off went wig and caftan straight,
There sat Sullah Beg, elate;
And, with look of savage joy,
This he said to Hatem Toi:
"Though no purchase gold may make,
Strength retains what wit may take."

"Stay!" replied the other, next.
"Do not think me sorely vexed."

Thine the brute shall freely be
With one favor given to me:
Let no mortal ever wis
How you gained her. Grant me this."

"Ha!" said Sullah Beg and laughed.

"Lose all credit for my craft?"

"No!" the other said, "not so!

But, lest future tale of woe
May be reckoned as a lie,
And some wretch unaided die!"

Sullah Beg from saddle leapt;
Straight to Hatem Toi he stept;
Gave him reins in hand, and said,
While he reverent bent his head:

"For thy pardon low I bend,
Be my brother and my friend!"

Thomas Dunn English.

ONE OF THE HEROES.

HARK! through the wild night's darkness rings
out a terrible cry,
And the woman shudders to hear it in the room
up close to the sky;
"Fire!" in accents of terror, and voices the cry
repeat,
And the fire-bells join in the clamor out in the
stormy street.

“ God grant we are safe, my darling!” she says to
the child in her arms,
While the voices far down in the darkness add to
the bell’s alarms;
Then she thinks of the two little children who
are sleeping peacefully near,
And “ God pity the poople in danger,” she adds
with a thrill of fear.

The voices ring louder and louder. She hears the
swift tread of feet,
And the sound of engines rumbling below in the
stormy street.

“ It must be the fire is near us.” She listens: a
step on the stair;
Then the door is flung wide, and beyond it she
sees the red flames’ glare.

“ Give me the child!” cries the fireman. “ There’s
not a moment to spare!”

The flames like a glittering serpent are writhing
up the stair.

“ No, I will carry my baby !” and then she points
to the bed

Where the light from the hall shines brightly over
a golden head.

One little head on the pillow,—one only,—the
fireman sees,

With flossy curls stirring about it in the breath of
the fiery breeze.

He lifts the child, while the other is cuddled away
from sight,

And springs down the stair where the flame-
hounds snarl after their prey in its flight.

On, on, through the fire that leaps round him as a
swimmer breasts the wave,

Scorched, and blind, and breathless, to find escape
or a grave!

On through the fiery whirlpool till at last he gains
the street,

Thank God! and lays down his burden safe at the
mother's feet.

“*One! only one?*” she cries wildly. “You have
left the other to die!”

Oh, the terrible, terrible anguish that rings in the
mother's cry!

“*I will save you, my child, or die with you!*” and,
maddened by love's despair,

She puts her babe from her bosom, and springs
toward the flame-wreathed stair.

“You shall not go!” he tells her, and holds her
back from death,

“I left your child,—I will save it,—if I can.”
Then catching his breath

For the terrible task before him, he leaps up the
lurid way.

“God help him!” the awed crowd whispers. “He
goes to his death,” they say.

Moments that seem like ages go by and he comes
not back.

The flames leap higher and higher. The frail
walls sway and crack.

“Oh, my lost little child!” cries the mother, for-
getting the babes at her breast,

In this moment of awful anguish she loveth the
lost child best.

Up from the crowd, all breathless with hope and
doubt and fear,

Goes a cry: “Thank God, he’s coming with the
child!” and cheer on cheer

Rings through the night, blending strangely with
the wind and the wild flames’ roar,

As out of the tottering building the fireman
springs once more.

Straight to the mother he staggers with the res-
cued child and cries:

“I left him, and I have saved him!” and the
hero looks out of his eyes;

Then he falls at her feet; they crowd round him,
and lift his drooping head.

“I—saved—the—child,” he whispers,—a gasp—
and the hero is dead.

Eben E. Rexford.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together,
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair,
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away.

Longfellow.

LITTLE GOLDENHAIR.¹

GOLDENHAIR climbed upon grandpapa's knee.
Dear little Goldenhair! tired was she;
All the day busy, as busy could be.

¹Imitation of child-voice, high pitch, small volume of tone.

Up in the morning, as soon as 'twas light,
Out with the birds and butterflies bright,
Skipping about till the coming of night.

Grandpapa toyed with the curls on her head,
“What has my darling been doing,” he said,
“Since she arose with the sun from her bed?”

“Pitty much,” answered the sweet little one.
“I cannot tell so much things I have done.
Played with my dolly, and feeded my Bun;

“And then I jumped with my little jump-rope;
And I made, out of some water and soap,
Bootiful worlds, mamma’s castles of hope.

“I afterward readed in my picture-book;
And Bella and I we went down to look
For smooth little stones by the side of the brook.

“And then I comed home and eated my tea;
And I climbed up on grandpapa’s knee;
And I jes as tired as tired can be.”

Lower and lower the little head pressed,
Until it dropped upon grandpapa’s breast.
Dear little Goldenhair, sweet be thy rest!

*We are but children. The things that we do
Are as sports of a babe to the Infinite view
That marks all our weakness, and pities it, too.*

God grant that when night overshadows our way,
And we shall be called to account for our day,
He may find *us* as guileless as Goldenhair lay.

And oh, when aweary, may *we* be so blest,
As to sink like the innocent child to our rest,
And feel ourselves clasped to the Infinite breast!



RESPECT FOR THE AGED.

It happened at Athens, during a public representation of some play, exhibited in honor of the State, that an old gentleman came too late for a place suitable to his age and quality.

A number of young men, who observed the difficulty and confusion the poor old gentleman was in, made signs to him that they would accommodate him, if he came where they sat.

The good man bustled through the crowd accordingly; but when he came to the seats to which he was invited, the jest among the young fellows was, to sit close, and expose the confusion and embarrassment of the old man to the gaze of the whole audience.

The frolic went round all the benches reserved for the Athenians. But on those occasions there were also particular places set apart for strangers.

When the good man, covered with confusion,

came toward the boxes appointed for the Lacedemonians, these honest, though less instructed people, rose from their seats, and, with the greatest respect, received the old gentleman among them.

The Athenians, being suddenly touched with a sense of the Lacedemonians' virtue and their own misconduct, gave a thunder of applause; and the old man cried out, "The Athenians understand what is good, but the Lacedemonians practise it."

Addison.

HOME.

"WHERE is thy home?" I asked a child
Who in the morning air
Was twining flowers most sweet and wild
In garlands for her hair.

"My home," the happy heart replied,
And smiled in childish glee,
"Is on the sunny mountain side,
Or where I chance to be."

Oh! blessings fall on artless youth,
And all its rosy hours,
When every word is joy and truth,
Its home among the flowers.

“Where is *thy* home? thou lonely man,”
I asked a pilgrim grey,
Who came, with furrowed brow and wan,
Slow musing on his way.

He paused, and with a solemn mien
Upturned his holy eyes ;
“The land I seek thou ne’er hast seen,
My home is in the skies.”

Oh! blest—thrice blest the heart must be
To whom such thoughts are given,
That walks from worldly fetters free,—
Its only home in heaven!

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

GREAT King William spread before him
All his stores of wealth untold,—
Diamonds, emeralds, and rubies,
Heaps on heaps of minted gold.
Mournfully he gazed upon it
As it glittered in the sun,
Sighing to himself, “O treasure!
Held in care, by sorrow won!
Millions think me rich and happy;
But, alas! before me piled,
I would give thee ten times over
For the slumbers of a child!”

Great King William from his turret
 Heard the martial trumpets blow,
Saw the crimson banners floating
 Of a countless host below;
Saw their weapons flash in sunlight,
 As the squadrons trod the sward;
And he sighed, "O mighty army,
 Hear thy miserable lord:
At my word thy legions gather—
 At my nod thy captains bend;
But, with all thy power and splendor,
 I would give thee for a friend!"

Great King William stood on Windsor,
 Looking, from its castled height,
O'er his wide-spread realm of England
 Glittering in the morning light;
Looking on the tranquil river
 And the forest waving free.
And he sighed, "O land of beauty,
 Fondled by the circling sea!
Mine thou art, but I would yield thee
 And be happy, could I gain,
In exchange, a peasant's garden,
 And a conscience free from stain!"

THE LEGEND OF ST. FREDA.

THERE once was an ancient city
Beside the silvery sea,
Where the white ships lay at anchor,
And the glad waves tossed in glee.

And down by the wharves the houses
Were low, and dark, and small;
But beyond, the streets were spacious
And the mansions grand and tall.

Here loathsome vice was hidden,
There virtue walked secure;
And those were the homes of the wealthy,
And these were the haunts of the poor.

In a dark and lonely garret
Where the sunlight's radiant flame
Through the narrow cobwebbed windows
Feebly and faintly came,

Alone in the rosy morning,
Alone in the twilight shade,
With God and her precious lily
Dwelt a little orphan maid.

All day through the crowded city
She begged her bitter bread,
And at night in the lonely garret
She laid her weary head.

And as one eve she lingered
By the old cathedral grim,
Where swelled the organ's music
And rang the holy hymn,

Amid the roll of anthems,
And wailing of the psalms,
She heard the old priest pleading,
“Bring, bring to the Lord thine alms!”

Through sounding aisles and arches,
It rang like a trumpet call;
“Who gives to the dear Lord Jesus
The holiest gift of all?”

“I am small and poor,” said Freda,
“No offering can I bring
Save my flower, within whose petals
Are folded angel's wings,—

“My lily, with snow-white blossoms,
And green leaves arching o'er;
But life will be darker than ever
When it blooms for me no more.”

The wind from the distant forest
Came with a dirge-like moan,
“Why should I fear?” said Freda,
“Will the Lord not keep His own?”

Then home she ran through the darkness,
And out from the garret's gloom
She brought her beautiful lily
With its fragrant, rare perfume.

Her eyes were sadly tearful
As she passed thro' the wondering throng,
But she thought of the holy Saviour,
And her fainting heart grew strong.

And she said, while her blue eyes brightened
With the light of a love divine,
"I give to the dear Lord Jesus
The only treasure mine!"

Gold gleamed upon the altar
And gems of richest cost,
But the priest said, bending reverent,
"This child has given the most!"

Then lo, a beauteous marvel!
The dew-drops pearls became;
Each flower was a golden lily,
Each leaf was a leaf of flame;

And there beside the altar
The Christ-child seemed to stand,
And the crown reserved for the sainted
Gleamed bright within His hand,

And His voice in silvery accents
 Rang through the lofty hall:
 "A crown of light for Freda
 Who gives to the Lord her all!"

Ah ! richer than gold or silver,
 And wealth and rank above,
 In the sight of the dear Lord Jesus
 Is a child's unsullied love.

With heavenly store forever
 Doth He repay our gifts,
 And when we take our burden
 Its weight from our hearts He lifts.

For thorns He gives us roses,
 Bright smiles for earth's cold frowns;
 For moans the harp's glad music,
 And for crosses golden crowns!

arah D. Hobart.

THE ICE-FLOWER ON MOUNT CENIS.

WHERE the snow lies deepest, by the frozen lake,
 There the lovely ice-flow'r doth her station take;
 Spreading wide her mantle of delicious blue,
 Not the midnight heavens boast a deeper hue.

I had climbed the mountain, leaving with a sigh
Chestnut woods and vineyards, and a southern sky;
Matchless charms resigning, nevermore to see,
When, with sweet surprisal, fell my eyes on thee.

Strange thy choice, bright flower, thus 'mid ice to
bloom,
Shedding life and gladness here, where all is
gloom:
Had the earth no hedgerow, garden, or parterre,
Warmer, kindlier shelter for a thing so fair?

Did no sunbeams linger in the vale below?
Seemed their shining brighter here, amid the
snow?
Or, with lavish sweetness, wouldst thou fling thy
store
Like a royal giver at the poorest door?

Dear to me our meeting, and the thoughts it
brings,
Memories and fancies, sweet imaginings;
Pictures of a friendship not in thoughtless youth,
But in sadder manhood when we love in truth.

Deeper and intenser are the ties that bind
Hearts whom kindred natures late have chanced
to find;

Life, it may be, waning, youth long past—when
lo!

One last, precious blossom greets us from the
snow.

In the rock fast rooted it hath found its stay;
Mortal hand shall never tear those roots away:
Still through frost and tempest it will yield its
bloom,

And its choicest beauty wreathes around the tomb.

Songs in the Night.



THE PATTERN OF LITTLE FEET.

OVER my head, in the morning early,

I heard the patter of little feet,

Rising above the hurly-burly

Out in the fast-awakening street.

I like my nap in the morning early,—

That drowsy, sleeping, waking time,—

And am apt to give way to a touch of the surly

With one who breaks on its soothing rhyme.

And so this morn, when I heard the clatter,

I turned uneasily in my bed,

And bothered my brain to guess the matter

With the little ones pattering over my head.

My nap was gone, and in humor sulky
I stretched a loud and imperious yawn,
And then, with a word both big and bulky,
I blessed the hour those babes were born.

With a knitted brow and a hasty toilet,
I made up my mind as I mounted the stairs
Whatever the fun, I would quickly spoil it
By coming upon them unawares.
I never had seen my top-floor neighbors ;
This only I knew, that the tidy house,
Save and except for those infantine labors,
Was silent and still as a baby-mouse.

I knocked at the door, and a moment waited;
The noise was hushed to a whispered word;
The patter of little feet abated,
And a tiny hand on the knob I heard.
The door, with a labored opening, started,
And full in its light a vision appeared,
That carried my heart to the days departed,
And to one to whom it was ever endeared.

Oh, vision of life in the darkened palace
Where I have enshrined the one of my love!
What vestige remained of the wrath and malice
I threatened to wreak on the noise above?

What memoried thought is the one I am meeting?

What hands are they stretched as I entered the
door?

“Are you my papa?” was the baby-like greeting;

“Are you my papa, come home from the war?”

“No, darling,” I said, with a choking emotion,

“I am not your papa, come home from the war;
I am only a waif on the fathomless ocean,

With no one to love me the weary world o’er.”

“I will love you myself—you shall be my papa,”

And I caught the sweet child with the wonder-
ing eyes

Up close to my breast where the memories are.

Oh, where was my heart as I lay in bed dozing,

And the noise overhead could not quicken its
beat?

The chambers of memory surely were closing

When no entrance was found for those dear
little feet;

For had I the riches we read of in story,

I would give up the whole to sweep away years—
To bring back the pleasure, the wealth, and the
glory,

The patter of dear little feet to my ears.

J. W. Watson.

A NURSERY TALE.

OH ! did you not hear in your nursery
The tale that the gossips tell,
Of the two young girls that came to drink
At a certain Fairy well ?
The words of the youngest were as sweet
As the smile of her ruby lip,
But the tongue of the eldest seemed to move
As if venom were on its tip !

At the well a beggar accosted them
(A sprite in a mean disguise) ;
The eldest rebuked her with scornful brow,
That brought tears in her sister's eyes.
Cried the Fairy, " Whenever *you* speak, sweet girl,
Pure gems from your lips shall fall,
But whenever *you* utter a word, proud maid,
From your tongue shall a serpent crawl."

And have you not met with those sisters oft
In the haunts of the old and young ?
The *first* with her pure and unsullied lip ?
The *last* with her serpent tongue ?
Yes—the *first* is KINDNESS, and diamonds bright
On the darkest theme she throws ;
And the *last* is SLANDER—leaving the slime
Of the snake wherever she goes !

T. H. Bayly.

SANTA CLAUS AND THE MOUSE.

ONE Christmas eve, when Santa Claus
 Came to a certain house,
 To fill the children's stockings there,
 He found a little mouse.

“A merry Christmas, little friend,”
 Said Santa, good and kind.
 “The same to you, sir !” said the mouse,
 “I thought you wouldn't mind

“If I should stay awake to-night,
 And watch you for a while.”
 “You're very welcome, little mouse,”
 Said Santa, with a smile.

And then he filled the stockings up,
 Before the mouse could wink,—
 From toe to top, from top to toe,
 There wasn't left a chink.

“Now, they won't hold another thing,”
 Said Santa Claus with pride.
 A twinkle came in mousie's eyes,
 But humbly he replied:

“It’s not polite to contradict—
Your pardon I implore,—
But in the fullest stocking there,
I could put one thing more.”

“Oh, ho !” laughed Santa, “silly mouse!
Don’t I know how to pack?
By filling stockings all these years,
I should have learned the knack.”

And then he took the stocking down
From where it hung so high,
And said: “Now put in one thing more;
I give you leave to try.”

The mousie chuckled to himself,
And then he softly stole
Right to the stocking’s crowded ‘toe,
And gnawed a little hole !

“Now, if you please, good Santa Claus,
I’ve put in one thing more;
For you will own, that little hole
Was not in there before.”

How Santa Claus did laugh and laugh!
And then he gaily spoke;
“Well, you shall have a Christmas cheese
For that nice little joke!”

BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

UP from the meadows rich with corn,
 Clear in the cool September morn,
 The clustered spires of Frederick stand,
 Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.
 Round about them orchards sweep,
 Apple and peach tree fruited deep,
 Fair as a garden of the Lord
 To the eyes of the famished Rebel horde.
 On that pleasant morn of the early fall
 When Lee marched over the mountain wall,--
 Over the mountains, winding down,
 Horse and foot into Frederick town,—
 Forty flags with their silver stars,
 Forty flags with their crimson bars,
 Flapped in the morning wind; the sun
 Of noon looked down, and saw not one.
 Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
 Bowed with her four score years and ten;
 Bravest of all in Frederick town,
 She took up the flag the men hauled down.

In her attic-window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

“Halt!”—the dust-brown ranks stood fast;
“Fire!”—out blazed the rifle blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash,

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

“Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country’s flag,” she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman’s deed and word:

“Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!” he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet;

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host,

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear,
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of freedom and union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

John Greenleaf Whittier.

KEEPING HIS WORD.

"ONLY a penny a box," he said ;
But the gentleman turned away his head,
As if he shrank from the squalid sight
Of the boy who stood in the falling light.

"Oh, sir !" he stammered, "you cannot know "
(And he brushed from his matches the flakes of
snow,

That the sudden tear might have chance to fall.)

"Or I think—I think you would take them all.

"Hungry and cold at our garret-pane,
Ruby will watch till I come again,
Bringing the loaf. The sun has set,
And he hasn't a crumb of breakfast yet.

"One penny, and then I can buy the bread !"
The gentleman stopped: "And you ?" he said ;
"I—I can put up with them—hunger and cold,
But Ruby is only five years old.

"I promised our mother before she went—
She knew I would do it, and died content—
I promised her, sir, through best, through worst,
I always would think of Ruby first."

The gentleman paused at his open door,
Such tales he had often heard before ;
But he fumbled his purse in the twilight drear,
"I have nothing less than a shilling here."

“ Oh, sir, if you’ll only take the pack
I’ll bring you the change in a moment back,—
Indeed you may trust me !” “ Trust you !—no!
But here is the shilling; take it and go.”

The gentleman lolled in his cozy chair,
And watched his cigar-wreath melt in air,
And smiled on his children, and rose to see
The baby asleep on its mother’s knee.

“ And now it is nine by the clock,” he said,
“ Time that my darlings were all a-bed;
Kiss me ‘ good night,’ and each be sure,
When you’re saying your prayers, remember the
 poor.”

Just then came a message—“ A boy at the door,”—
But ere it was uttered he stood on the floor
Half breathless, bewildered, and ragged and
 strange;

“ *I’m Ruby—Mike’s brother—I’ve brought you the
 change.*

“ Mike’s hurt, sir; ’twas dark; the snow made him
 blind,
And he didn’t take notice the train was behind
Till he slipped on the track; and then it whizzed
 by:
And he’s home in the garret; I think he will die.

“ Yet nothing would do him, sir—nothing would do

But out through the snow I must hurry to you ;
Of his hurt he was certain you wouldn't have heard,

And so you might think *he had broken his word.*”

When the garret they hastily entered, they saw
Two arms mangled, shapeless, outstretched from the straw,

“ *You did it—dear Ruby—God bless you !*” he said,
And the boy, gladly smiling, sank back—and was dead.



THE CHRISTIAN MAIDEN AND THE LION.

“ GIVE the Christians to the lions !” was the savage Roman's cry,

And the vestal virgins added their voices shrill and high ;

And the Cæsar gave the order, “ Loose the lions from their den !

For Rome must have a spectacle worthy of gods and men !”

Forth to the broad arena a little band was led,
But words forbear to utter how the sinless blood was shed.

No sigh the victims proffered, but now and then a
prayer
From lips of age and lips of youth rose upward on
the air;
And the savage Cæsar muttered, "By Hercules, I
swear,
Braver than gladiators these dogs of Christians
are."

Then a lictor bending slavishly, saluting with his
axe,
Said, "Mighty Imperator! the sport one feature
lacks:
We have an Afric lion, savage, and great of limb,
Fasting since yester-eve; is the Grecian maid for
him?"

The Emperor assented. With a frantic roar and
bound
The monster, bursting from his den, gazed terribly
around.
And toward him moved a maiden, slowly, but yet
serene;
"By Venus!" cried the Emperor, "she walketh
like a queen."

Unconscious of the myriad eyes she crossed the
blood-soaked sand,
'Till face to face the maid and beast in opposition
stand;

The daughter of Athene, in white arrayed, and
fair,
Gazed on the monster's lowered brow, and breathed
a silent prayer.
Then forth she drew a crucifix and held it high in
air.

Lo, and behold ! a miracle ! the lion's fury fled,
And at the Christian maiden's feet he laid his
lordly head ;
While as she fearlessly caressed, he slowly rose,
and then,
With one soft, backward look at her, retreated to
his den.
One shout rose from the multitude, tossed like a
stormy sea:
" The Gods have so decreed it; let the Grecian
maid go free !"

Within the catacombs that night a saint with
snowy hair
Folded upon his aged breast his daughter young
and fair ;
And the gathered brethren lift a chant of praise
and prayer ;
From the monster of the desert, from the heathen
fierce and wild,
God has restored to love and life his sinless, trust-
ing child.

Francis A. Durivage.

THE PRIEST'S LEAP.

THE priest is out upon the hill before the dawn of
day;

Through shadows deep, o'er rugged ground, he
treads his painful way;

A peasant's homely garb he wears, that none but
friendly eyes

May know who dares to walk abroad, beneath that
rough disguise.

Inside his coat and near his heart lies what he
treasures most,

For there a tiny silver shrine contains the Sacred
Host.

Adoring as he goes, he seeks a cabin low and rude,
To nourish there a fainting soul with God's ap-
pointed food.

For so it is, within that land whose brave and
faithful race

In other days made all the isle a bright and holy
place:

Its temples are in ruins now; its altars overthrown;
Its hermits' cells in cliff and cave are tenantless
and lone.

The ancient race are broken down, their power
passed away,

Poor helots, plundered and despised, they tread
the soil to-day;

But yet, though fallen their fortunes be, through
want, and woe, and ill,
Close hid, and fondly loved, they keep their priests
amongst them still.

Their faithful priests, who, though by law con-
demned, denounced, and banned,
Will not forsake their suffering flocks, or quit their
stricken land.

The morning brightens as he goes, the little hut is
near,

When runs a peasant to his side, and speaks into
his ear:

“Fly, Father, fly! the spies are out; they’ve
watched you on your way,

They’ve brought the soldiers on your track to seize
you or to slay.

Quick, Father, dear! here stands your horse; no
whip or spur he’ll need;

Mount you at once upon his back and put him to
his speed.

“And there, what course you’d better take; ’tis
God alone that knows.

Before you spreads a stormy sea; behind you come
your foes;

But mount at once and dash away; take chance
for field or flood,

And God may raise His hands to-day to foil the
men of blood.”

Up sprang the priest; away he rode, but ere a mile
 was run,
Right in his path, he saw the flash of bayonets in
 the sun.
He turned his horse's head, and sped along the
 way,
But oh! there, too, his hunters were, fast closing
 on their prey.

Straight forward, then, he forced his steed, and
 urged him with his hand
To where the cliff stood high and sheer above the
 sea-beat strand;
Then from the soldiers and the spies arose a joy-
 ful cheer;
The toilsome chase was well-nigh o'er, the wished-
 for end was near;
They stretched their eager hands to pluck the
 rider from his seat;
A few more lusty strides, and they might swing
 him to their feet,
For now betwixt him and the verge are scarce ten
 feet of ground.
But, stay! good God! out o'er the cliff the horse is
 seen to bound.

The soldiers hasten to the spot, they gaze around,
 below;
No splash disturbs the waves that keep their
 smooth and even flow;

From their green depths no form of man is seen
to rise,
Far down upon the stony strand no mangled body
lies.

“Look up! look up!” a soldier shouts; “oh!
what a sight is there!

Behold the priest, on horseback still, is speeding
through the air!”

They looked, and lo! the words were true, and,
trembling with affright,

They saw the vision pierce the blue and vanish
from their sight.

Three miles away, across the bay, a group, with
wondrous eyes,

Saw some strange speck come rushing fast toward
them from the skies.

A bird they deemed it first to be; they watched its
course, and soon

They deemed it some black burning mass flung
from the sun or moon.

It neared the earth—their hearts beat fast—they
held their breaths with awe,

As clear, and clearer still—the horse—and then—
the man—they saw!

They shut their eyes, they stopped their ears, to
spare their hearts the shock;

As steed and rider both came down and struck the
solid rock.

Ay, on the solid rock they struck, but never made
a sound;
No horrid mass of flesh and blood was scattered
all around;
For when the horse fell on his knees, and when
the priest was thrown
A little forward, and his hands came down upon
the stone,
That instant, by God's potent will, the flinty rock
became
Like moistened clay, or wax that yields before a
glowing flame.
Unhurt, unharmed, the priest arose, and with a
joyful start
He pressed his hand upon his breast—the Host
was near his heart.

Long years have passed away since then, in sun,
and wind, and rain,
But still of that terrific leap the wondrous marks
remain.
On the high cliff from which he sprang,—now
deemed a sacred place,—
The prints left by the horse's hoofs are plain for
all to trace.

T. D. Sullivan.

THE AUCTIONEER'S GIFT.

THE auctioneer leaped on a chair, and bold and
loud and clear

He poured his cataract of words, just like an
auctioneer.

An auction sale of furniture, where some hard
mortgagee

Was bound to get his money back, and pay his
lawyer's fee.

A humorist of wide renown, this doughty auc-
tioneer,

His joking raised the loud guffaw, and brought
the answering jeer.

He knocked down bureaus, beds and stoves and
clocks and chandeliers,

And a grand piano, which he said would "last a
thousand years;"

He rattled out the crockery, and sold the silver-
ware;

At last they passed him up to sell a little baby's
chair.

"How much? how much? come, make a bid; is
all your money spent?"

And then a cheap, facetious wag came up and bid,
"One cent."

Just then a sad-faced woman, who stood in silence
there,
Broke down and cried, "My baby's chair! My
poor dead baby's chair!"

"Here, madam, take your baby's chair," said the
softened auctioneer,
"I know its value all too well, my baby died last
year;
And if the owner of the chair, our friend, the
mortgagee,
Objects to this proceeding, let him send the bill to
me!"

Gone was the tone of raillery; the humorist auc-
tioneer
Turned shamefaced from his audience, to brush
away a tear;
The laughing crowd was awed and still, no tearless
eye was there
When the weeping woman reached and took her
little baby's chair.

S. W. Foss.

MOUSTACHE.

A FRIENDLESS pup that heard the fife
Sprang to the column thro' the clearing,
And on to Switzerland and strife
Went grenadiering.

Much he endured, and much he dared
The long hot doomsday of the nations:
He wore a trooper's scars; he shared
A trooper's rations;
Warned pickets, seized the Austrian spies,
Bore the despatches; thro' the forces
From fallen riders, prompt and wise,
Led back the horses;
Served round the tents or in the van,
Quick-witted, tireless as a treadle:
"This private wins," said Marshal Lannes,
"Ribbon and medal."
("Moustache, a brave French dog," it lay
Graven on silver, like a scholar's;
"Who lost a leg on Jena day,
But saved the colors!")
At Saragossa he was slain;
They buried him, and fired a volley:
End of Moustache. Nay, that were strain
Too melancholy.
His immortality was won,
His most of rapture came to bless him,
When, plumed and proud, Napoleon
Stooped to caress him.
His Emperor's hand upon his head!
How, since, shall lesser honors suit him?
Yet ever, in that army's stead,
Love will salute him.

And since not every cause enrolls
 Such little, fond, sagacious henchmen,
 Write this dog's moral on your scrolls,
 Soldiers and Frenchmen!

As law is law, can be no waste
 Of faithfulness, of worth and beauty;
 Lord of all time the slave is placed
 Who doth his duty.

No virtue fades to thin romance
 But Heaven to use eternal moulds it:
 Mark! Some firm pillar of new France,
 Moustache upholds it.

Louise Imogen Guiney.



MARION'S DINNER.

A British officer sent to negotiate an exchange of prisoners was conducted into Marion's encampment. There the scene took place which is here commemorated. The young officer was so deeply affected by the sentiments of Marion, that he subsequently resigned his commission and retired from the British service.

THEY sat on the trunk of a fallen pine, and their
 plate was a piece of bark,
 And the sweet potatoes were superfine, though
 bearing the embers' mark;

But Tom, with the sleeve of his cotton shirt, the
embers' had brushed away,
And then to the brook, with a step alert, he hied
on that gala day.

The British officer tried to eat, but his nerves were
out of tune,
And ill at ease on his novel seat, while absent both
knife and spoon ;
Said he, "You give me but Lenten fare, is the table
thus always slim ?
Perhaps with a Briton you will not share the cup
with a flowing brim !"

Then Marion put his potato down, on the homely
plate of bark—
He had to smile, for he could not frown, while gay
as the morning lark ;—
" 'Tis a royal feast I provide to-day, upon roots we
rebels dine,
And in Freedom's service we draw no pay,—is
that of ethics thine ?"

Then, with flashing eye and with heaving breast,
he looked to the azure sky,
"And," said he, with a firm, undaunted crest, "our
trust is in God on high !
The hard, hard ground is a downy bed, and
hunger its fangs foregoes,
And noble and firm is the soldier's tread in the
face of his country's foes."

The officer gazed on princely brow, where valor
and genius shone,
And upon that fallen pine his vow went up to his
Maker's throne,
"I will draw no sword against men like these, it
would drop from a nerveless hand,
And the very blood in my heart would freeze, if I
faced such a Spartan band."

From Marion's camp, with a saddened mien, he
hastened with awe away,
The sons of Anak his eyes had seen, and a giant
race were they.
No more on the tented field was he, and rich was
the truth he learned,
That men who could starve for Liberty, can neither
be crushed nor spurned.

Edward C. Jones.

THE DEAD DOLL.

You needn't be trying to comfort me—I tell you
my dolly is dead!
There's no use in saying she isn't, with a crack like
that in her head ;
It's just like you said it wouldn't hurt much to
have my tooth out, that day,
And then, when the man 'most pulled my head
off, you hadn't a word to say.

And I guess you must think I'm a baby, when you
say you can mend it with glue,
As if I didn't know better than that ! Why, just
suppose it was you ?

You might make her look all mended—but what
do I care for looks ?

Why glue's for chairs and tables, and toys, and the
backs of books !

My dolly ! my own little daughter ! Oh, but it's
the awfulest crack !

It just makes me sick to think of the sound when
her poor head went whack

Against that horrible brass thing that holds up the
little shelf,

Now, Nursey, what makes you remind me ? I
know that I did it myself ?

I think you must be crazy—you'll get her another
head !

What good would forty heads do her ? I tell you
my dolly is dead !

And to think I hadn't quite finished her elegant
new spring hat !

And I took a sweet ribbon of her's last night to tie
on that horrid cat !

When my mamma gave me that ribbon—I was
playing out in the yard—

She said to me, most expressly, “ Here's a ribbon
for Hildegarde.”

And I went and put it on Tabby, and Hildegarde
saw me do it ;

But I said to myself, " Oh, never mind, I don't
believe she knew it ! "

But I know that she knew it now, and I just be-
lieve, I do,

That her poor little heart was broken, and so her
head broke too.

Oh, my baby ! my little baby ! I wish my head
had been hit !

For I've hit it over and over, and it hasn't cracked
a bit.

But since the darling is dead, she'll want to be
buried, of course ;

We will take my little wagon, Nurse, and you
shall be the horse ;

And I'll walk behind and cry ; and we'll put her
in this, you see—

This dear little box—and we'll bury her there out
under the maple tree.

And papa will make me a tombstone, like the one
he made for my bird ;

And he'll put what I tell him on it—yes, every
single word !

I shall say, " Here lies Hildegarde, a beautiful
doll, who is dead ;

She died of a broken heart, and a dreadful crack
in her head. "

Margaret Vandegrift.

LITTLE NAN'S OFFERING.

THE great wide gates swung open,
The music softly sounded,
And loving hands were heaping the soldier's graves
with flowers ;
With pansies, pinks, and roses,
And pure, gold-hearted lilies,
The fairest, sweetest blossoms that grace the spring-
time bowers.

When down the walk came tripping
A wee, bareheaded girlie,
Her eyes were filled with wonder, her face was
grave and sweet ;
Her small brown hands were crowded
With dandelions yellow,—
The gallant, merry blossom that children love to
greet.

Oh, many smiled to see her,
That dimple-cheeked, wee baby,
Pass by with quaint intentness, as on a mission
bound ;
And, pausing oft an instant,
Let fall from out her treasures
A yellow dandelion upon each flower-strewn mound.

The music died in silence,
 A robin ceased its singing ;
 And in the fragrant stillness a bird-like whisper
 grew,
 So sweet, so clear, and solemn,
 That smiles gave place to tear-drops :
 “ Nan loves ’oo darlin’ soldier ; an’ here’s a f’ower
 for ’oo.”

LEGEND OF EASTER EGGS.

TRINITY bells with their hollow lungs,
 And their vibrant lips and their brazen tongues,
 Over the roofs of the city pour
 Their Easter music with joyous roar,
 Till the soaring notes to the sun are rolled,
 As he swings along in his path of gold.

“ Dearest papa,” says my boy to me,
 As he merrily climbs on his mother’s knee,
 “ Why are these eggs that you see me hold
 Colored so finely with blue and gold ?
 And what is the wonderful bird that lays
 Such beautiful eggs on Easter days ? ”

“ You have heard, my boy, of Him who died,
 Crowned with keen thorns, and crucified ;
 And how Joseph the wealthy—whom God reward—
 Cared for the corpse of the martyred Lord,
 And piously tombed it within the rock,
 And closed the gate with a mighty block.

“ Now, close by the tomb a fair tree grew,
With pendulous leaves and blossoms of blue ;
And deep in the green tree’s shadowy breast
A beautiful singing-bird sat on her nest,
Which was bordered with mosses like malachite,
And held four eggs of an ivory white.

“ Now, when the bird from her dim recess
Beheld the Lord in His burial dress,
And looked on the heavenly face so pale,
And the dear feet pierced with the cruel nail,
Her heart nigh broke with a sudden pang,
And out of the depths of her sorrow she sang.

“ All night long till the moon was up,
She sat and sang in her moss-wreathed cup,—
A song of sorrow as wild and shrill
As the homeless wind when it roams the hill ;
So full of fears, so loud and long,
That the grief of the world seemed turned to song.

“ But soon there came through the weeping night
A glimmering angel clothed in white ;
And he rolled the stone from the tomb away,
Where the Lord of the earth and heavens lay ;
And Christ arose in the cavern’s gloom,
And in living lustre came from the tomb.

“ Now, the bird that sang in the heart of the tree
Beheld this celestial mystery ;

And its heart was filled with sweet delight,
And it poured a song on the throbbing night.
Notes climbed on notes, till higher, higher,
They shot to heaven like spears of fire.

“When the glittering, white-robed angel heard
The sorrowing song of the grieving bird,
And heard the following chant of mirth
That hailed Christ risen again on earth,
He said, ‘Sweet bird, be forever blest,—
Thyself, thy eggs, and thy moss-wreathed nest!’

“And ever, my child, since that blessed night,
When death bowed down the Lord of light,
The eggs of that sweet bird change their hue,
And burn with red and gold and blue ;
Reminding mankind in their simple way,
Of the holy marvel of Easter Day.”

Fitz-James O'Brien.

WORK AND PRAYER.

A SCULPTOR knelt on the hard oak floor,
With mallet and chisel he wrought;
To cut from a shapeless mass of stone
A god-like image he sought.
Hour after hour at his work he toiled,
Nor rose from the oaken floor;
Scarce heeding the presence of those who came
To look in at the open door.

Among the ones who often came
To observe the progress made
Was a teacher great, who sadly smiled,
But with a sigh he said:
“My friend, where’er your chisel moves
Great transformation shows:
I wish I could on hearts of stone
Deal such transforming blows!”

The sculptor slowly raised his head,
And said with look sublime:
“Perhaps you might, my friend, if you worked
At your work as I work at mine;
Perhaps the heart of adamant
Would grow soft as the evening breeze,
If the work of softening was done,
Like mine, on your bended knees.”

He said no more, but the lesson sank
Deep into the teacher’s heart;
Perhaps at last he had really learned
The long-despaired of *art*.
Perhaps a human heart, tho’ soft,
A marble coat may wear,
But the marble cover can be chipped off
And rent by the aid of prayer.

The Angelus.

ST. MARTIN AND THE BEGGAR.

IN the freezing cold and the blinding snow
Of a wintry eve in the long ago,
Folding his cloak o'er clanking mail,
A soldier is fighting the angry gale
Inch by inch in the campfire's light,
Star of his longing this wintry night.

All in a moment his path is barred;
He draws his sword as he stands on guard.
But who is this with a wan, white face,
And piteous hands upheld for grace?
Tenderly bending, the soldier bold
Raises a beggar faint and cold.

Famished he seems, and almost spent,
The rags that cover him worn and rent.
Crust nor coin can the soldier find;
Never his wallet with gold is lined;
But his soul is sad at the sight of pain:
The sufferer's pleading is not in vain.

His mantle of fur is broad and warm,
Armor of proof against the storm.
He snatches it off without a word;
One downward pass of the gleaming sword,
And cleft in twain at his feet it lies
And the storm-wind howls 'neath the frowning skies.

"Half for thee"—and with tender art
He gathers the cloak round the beggar's heart—

“And half for me;” and with jocund song
In the teeth of the tempest he strides along,
Daring the worst of the sleet and snow,
That brave young spirit so long ago.

Lo! as he slept at midnight’s prime,
His tent had the glory of summer-time;
Shining out of a wondrous light,
The Lord Christ beamed on his dazzled sight.
“I was a beggar,” the Lord Christ said,
As he stood by the soldier’s lowly bed.
“Half of thy garment thou gavest me;
With the blessing of heaven I dower thee.”
And Martin rose from the hallowed tryst,
Soldier and servant and knight of Christ.

Margaret E. Sangster.

HOW THE BEES CAME BY THEIR STING.

THE honey-bees on Mount Hymettus, long and
long ago,
Had made some honey from the very sweetest
flowers that grow;
It was very clear, translucent, and golden in its hue,
It tasted of the sunshine, the roses, and the dew.
And they all declared, the oldest inhabitant as well
As the youngest, that for whiteness and firmness
of the cell,

For sweetness and for flavor, that there was not
anywhere
A drop of honey that with this a moment could
compare.
It seemed as though all gracious things had entered
into it,
It seemed an offering for the king of high Olympus
fit.
So thought the queen bee, and, of course, the others
thought as she did;
Therefore, without dissenting, it quickly was con-
ceded
That she should take it up to him (I quite assume
that you know
That when I speak of Jupiter, I am including
Juno).

So up to Mount Olympus, to Jupiter the Great,
The queen bee of Hymettus went flying swift and
straight,
And laid her gift of honey, fresh, amber-hued, and
sweet,
With many pretty compliments, low at his high-
ness' feet,
Saying: "O gracious Jupiter! the gift I bring
contains
The life of verdant valleys, and the soul of summer
rains;

The freshness of the morning, the noon's effulgent
glory,
The blushes of the roses as they listen to the story
That the south wind whispers to them, and the
fragrant breath that comes
From the lips of lily blossoms and the heart of
clover-blooms;
Besides which, and far better, it holds a love as
true
As the sweetness of the lilies or the freshness of
the dew.
And with humble admiration, we beg that you will
let us
At the feet of Mount Olympus lay the heart of
Mount Hymettus."
From all of which remarks it is plainly to be seen
That she was a very eloquent, poetical bee queen.

And Jupiter, admiring, unto himself avers
That his kindness and politeness at least shall
equal hers.
And so, with many a winning smile and many a
gracious bow,
He accepted her fair offering, explaining to her
how
Of all the gifts from any land or clan, or tribe or
nation,
There could be none that he would hold in higher
estimation.

Besides, he gave a banquet to the gods that night,
and so

She could see with half an effort that her gift was
apropos.

He was very kind and gracious, and, at last, in
reckless pleasure,

And wishing to make fit return in full and ample
measure,

Declared that he would deem it a very happy task
To give to her for all her kind the gift that she
might ask.

“So ask ye, gentle queen,” he said, “unfearing,
and straightway

Your desire shall be granted, let the same be what
it may.”

She mused a little moment, and then she said, “O
king!

I pray you give to me and mine a keen and subtle
sting,

That when the mortals vex us, as often they are fain,
That we may use the sting to their excruciating
pain.”

Then Jupiter was sorry, and thus in grief said he:
“Your choice does you no honor, O golden-belted
bee,

I deemed that to your graces—they are many, well
I know—

You would ask that I some greater and sweeter
would bestow,

That some all-crowning beauty or secret charm I'd
add;
Your choice, I must confess, O queen! has made
me very sad.
Still, since my word is given, my thoughtless vow
I will,
With certain sad conditions, most honestly fulfil.
I give the keen and subtle sting to you, O queen,
and yet,
Whenever it within the flesh of mortal man is set,
In the wound it shall remain. Oh, behold your
heartless choosing
Is a bane and not a blessing! for *you perish with
its using!*"

The queen was very sorrowful, and saw with pain
and wonder
That in her selfish wishing she had made a wretched
blunder.
She saw, what all the years since then have been
most surely proving,
That gain is to the giver and love is for the
loving;
That blows strike back, that haters for hating but
the worse are;
That curses evermore come back and dwell beside
the curser.

Carlotta Perry.

THE LITTLE MAID'S SERMON.

A LITTLE maid in a pale-blue hood
In front of a large brick building stood.
As she passed along, her quick eye spied
Some words on a little box inscribed.
'Twas a box that hung in the vestibule,
Outside the door of the charity school.

"Remember the poor," were the words she spelled,
Then looked at the dime her small hands held;
For chocolate creams were fresh that day
In the store just only across the way.
But gleams of victory shone o'er the face
As she raised her eyes to "the money-place."

But her arm was short and the box so high
That a gentleman heard, who was passing by,
"Please, sir, will you lift me just so much?"
(For the tiny fingers could almost touch.)
The stranger stopped, and he quickly stood
By the sweet-faced child in the pale-blue hood.

As he lifted her, she gently said:
"Would you mind it, sir, if you turned your head?
For you know I do not want to be
Like a proud, stuck-up old Pharisee."

He humored the little maid, but a smile
Played o'er his face as he stood there the while.

“Excuse me, child, but what did you say?”

The gentleman asked in a courteous way,
As he took in his the wee white hand.

“I believe I didn't quite understand.”

“Oh, sir, don't you know? Have you never read,”
Said the child amazed, “what the Saviour said?”

“We should not give like those hypocrite men
Who stood in the market-places then,
And gave their alms just for folks to tell,
Because they loved to be praised so well;
But give for Christ's sake from our little store
What only He sees, and nobody more.

“Good-bye, kind sir, this is my way home:
I'm sorry you'll have to walk alone.”

The gentleman passed along, and thought
Of large sums given for fame it bought;
And he said: “I never again will be
In the market-places a Pharisee.

She preached me a sermon, 'twas true and good,—
That dear little maid in the pale-blue hood!”

Susan Teall Perry.

THE GOOD.

“WHAT is the real good?”

I asked in musing mood.

Order, said the law court;

Knowledge, said the school;

Truth, said the wise man;

Pleasure, said the fool;

Love, said the maiden;

Beauty, said the page;

Freedom, said the dreamer;

Home, said the sage;

Fame, said the soldier;

Equity, the seer;

Spake my heart full sadly:

“The answer is not here.”

Then within my bosom

Softly this I heard:

“Each heart holds the secret;

Kindness is the word.”

J. Boyle O'Reilly.

SOMETHING GREAT.

THE trial was ended—the vigil past;

All clad in his arms was the knight at last,

The goodliest knight in the whole wide land,

With a face that shone with a purpose grand.

The king looked on him with gracious eyes,
And said: "He is meet for some high emprise."
To himself he thought: "I will conquer fate,
I will surely die or do something great."

So from the palace he rode away.
There was trouble and need in the town that day;
A child had strayed from his mother's side
Into the woodland dark and wide.
"Help!" cried the mother with sorrow wild,
"Help me, Sir Knight, to seek my child!
The hungry wolves in the forest roam;
Help me to bring my lost one home!"

He shook her hand from his bridle rein:
"Alas! poor mother, you ask in vain.
Some meaner succor will do, maybe,
Some squire or varlet of low degree.
There are mighty wrongs in the world to right;
I keep my sword for a noble fight.
I am sad at heart for your baby's fate,
But I ride in haste to do something great."

One wintry night when the sun was set,
A blind old man by the way he met:
"Now, good Sir Knight, for Our Lady's sake,
On the sightless wanderer pity take!
The wind blows cold, and the sun is down;
Lead me, I pray, till I reach the town."
"Nay," said the knight; "I cannot wait;
I ride in haste to do something great."

So on he rode in his armor bright,
His sword all keen for the longed-for fight.
“Laugh with us—laugh!” cried the merry crowd.
“Oh! weep!” wailed others with sorrow bowed.
“Help us!” the weak and weary prayed,
But for joy, nor grief, nor need he stayed.
And the years rolled on, and his eyes grew dim,
And he died—and none made moan for him.

He missed the good that he might have done,
He missed the blessings he might have won.
Seeking some glorious task to find,
His eyes to all humbler work were blind.

He that is faithful in that which is least
Is bidden to sit at the heavenly feast.
Yet men and women lament their fate,
If they be not called to do something great.

Florence Tylee.

“GIVE, AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE.”

A FLOWER, on the bank of a brooklet,
Said: “Dear Brook, I’m very dry;
Just give me a taste of fresh water,
As swiftly you hurry by?”
“I’ve only enough for myself,” said the Brook,
“And naught for charity.”

“O Cloud,” said the Brook, “remember
I’m expected soon at the sea,
And I’m almost out of fresh water—
Then, O Cloud, remember me.”
“I’ve nothing to give,” said the Cloud, “unless
’Tis a little sympathy.”

“O Sea,” said the Cloud, “you’re rich and full,
You can give me all I need;
If I had a quarter as much as you,
All cries for help I’d heed.”
“I haven’t too much,” said the Sea, “and then
’Tis my duty to feed.”

“Sweet Flower,” said the Bee, “just give me a taste
Of the honey within your cup.”
But drawing nearer, the Bee perceived
The Flower was all withered up.
So he said no more, sought beyond
A better place to sup.

The Sun was sailing along in the sky
And he saw the withered Flower,
And the pebbly bed of the Brook, now dry,
And the Cloud bereft of power,
And the gasping Sea, as restless quite
As if it had no dower.

And he smiled a smile, so bright and warm,
Then the Sea was ashamed of its greed,
And sent a donation up to the Cloud,
The Cloud supplied the Brook's need,
And the Brook the Flower, the Flower the Bee
Abundantly did feed.

Our hearts are hard as the cold, hard stones,
As pitiless as the Sea,
Till the Sun of Righteousness arise,
Our selfishness to see.
Let us pray, my friend, for a bright, warm smile
To fall on you and me.



THE TWO LITTLE STOCKINGS.

Two little stockings hung side by side,
Close to the fireplace broad and wide.
"Two?" said Saint Nick, as down he came,
Loaded with toys and many a game.

"Ho, ho!" said he, with a laugh of fun,
"I'll have no cheating, my pretty one;
I know who dwells in this house, my dear,
There's only one little girl lives here."

So he crept up close to the chimney-place,
And measured a sock with a sober face.
Just then a wee little note fell out
And fluttered low like a bird about.

“Aha ! what’s this ?” said he, in surprise,
As he pushed his specs up close to his eyes,
And read the address in a child’s rough plan,
“Dear Saint Nicholas,” so it began;

“The other stocking you see on the wall
I have hung for a child named Clara Hall.
She’s a poor little girl, but very good,
So I thought, perhaps, you kindly would
Fill up her stocking, too, to-night,
And help to make her Christmas bright.
If you’ve not enough for both stockings there,
Please put all in Clara’s, I shall not care.”

Saint Nicholas brushed a tear from his eye,
And, “God bless you, darling,” he said, with a sigh,
Then softly he blew through the chimney high
A note like a bird’s, as it soars on high,
When down came two of the funniest mortals
That ever were seen this side earth’s portals.

“Hurry up,” said Saint Nick, and nicely prepare
All a little girl needs where money is rare.”

Then oh, what a scene there was in that room !
Away went the elves, but down from the gloom
Of the sooty old chimney comes tumbling low
A child's whole wardrobe, from head to toe.

How Santa Claus laughed as he gathered them in,
And fastened each one to the sock with a pin.
Right to the toe he hung a blue dress,
“She'll think it came from the sky, I guess,”
Said Saint Nicholas, smoothing the folds of blue
And tying the hood to the stocking, too.

When all the warm clothes were fastened on,
And both little socks were filled and done,
Then Santa Claus tucked a toy here and there,
And hurried away to the frosty air,
Saying, “God pity the poor, and bless the dear child
Who pities them, too, on this night so wild.”

The wind caught the words and bore them on high
Till they died away in the midnight sky;
While Saint Nicholas flew through the icy air,
Bringing “peace and good will” with him every-
where.



THREE LITTLE GRAVES.

'Twas autumn, and the leaves were dry
And rustled on the ground,
And chilly winds went whistling by,
With low and passive sound,
As through the graveyard's lone retreat,
By meditation led,
I walked with slow and cautious feet
Above the sleeping dead.
Three little graves, ranged side by side,
My close attention drew;
O'er two the tall grass bending sighed,
And one seemed fresh and new.
As lingering there I mused awhile
On death's long dreamless sleep,
And mourning life's deceitful smile,
A mourner came to weep.

Her form was bowed, but not with years,
Her words were faint and few;
And on those little graves her tears
Distilled like morning dew.
A prattling boy, some four years old,
Her trembling hand embraced;
And from my heart the tale he told
Will never be effaced.

“Mamma, now you must love me more,
For little sister’s dead;
And t’other sister died before,
And brother, too, you said.
Mamma, what made sweet sister die;
She loved me when we played. .
You told me if I would not cry,
You’d show me where she’s laid.”

“’Tis here, my child, that sister lies,
Deep buried in the ground;
No light comes to her little eyes,
And she can hear no sound.”

“Mamma, why can’t we take her up,
And put her in my bed ?
I’ll feed her from my little cup,
And then she won’t be dead.
For sister ’ll be afraid to lie
In this dark grave to-night;
And she’ll be very cold, and cry,
Because there is no light.”

“No, sister is not cold, my child,
For God, who saw her die,
As He looked down from heaven and smiled,
Called her above the sky.

“And then her spirit quickly fled
To God, by whom ’twas given;
Her body in the ground is dead,
But sister lives in heaven.”

“ Mamma, won’t she be hungry there,
And want some bread to eat ?
And who will give her clothes to wear,
And keep them clean and neat ?
Papa must go and carry some,
I’ll send her all I’ve got;
And he must bring sweet sister home;
Mamma, now must he not ?”
“ No, my dear child, that cannot be;
But if you’re good and true,
You’ll one day go to her, but she
Can never come to you.
‘ Let little children come to me,’
Once the good Saviour said;
And in His arms she’ll always be,
And God will give her bread.”

THE SCOUT’S MISTAKE.

I.

“ How get them the tidings ? How send them
the word ?
It sets all the blood in my pulses a-shiver !
The enemy near, and they cannot have heard,
For no one has crossed since the rise in the river.

“The woods are between us; there’s storm in the sky!

No rider dare venture the ford till the morning.
If only they knew of the danger! Yet I
Am helpless to give them a token of warning.

“Ah, were I but young again!” sadly he said,
“My youth in its heyday, the mettle all in it,
No weakness to chafe me, no snow on my head,—
The filly and I would be off in a minute!”

A stripling beside him looked up with a flash,
“Why, father, what matters the forest? I’ll
skim it.

What matters how fiercely the tempest may dash?
Who cares for the river? The filly can swim it.

“Just think of the peril! My brothers are there.
By daylight, at farthest, some signal shall show it.
They must not, like panthers, be trapped in their
lair;
And sure as I’m living, their colonel shall know
it!”

II.

The morning broke gray. At the tap of the drum
The corps from their briefly snatched slumbers
were shaken.

“From over the river some tidings have come,—
A spy from some enemy near has been taken.

“They say he was seen in the dusk of the dawn,
Just mounting the bank, at the edge of a thicket,
Through which he came galloping recklessly on,
Not heeding or hearing the ‘halt’ of the picket.”

“To the front with him!” ordered the colonel.
Just then
Rode hurriedly forward a scout, with a letter.
“We made a mistake, sir—I—I and the men,—
No room nor no reason to know any better.”

“Aha!” and the officer eagerly read.
“The gallant young fellow! How well that you
brought him
So quick with his warning!” The scout dropped
his head:
“A spy, sir,—I thought him a spy,—and *I shot
him!*”

Margaret J. Preston.

THE CATHOLIC PSALM

BORDERED by bluff and by meadow, reflecting a
golden day,
Placid and calmly deceitful, the lovely Lake
Michigan lay,

The sun had gone down in glory, and naught save
 one tiny band
Of cloud on the distant horizon, shaped like a
 ghostly hand,
Gave the crew on our good ship a warning.

 The skipper was pacing the deck,
When he suddenly stopped near the helmsman,
 and anxiously scanned the cloud-speck—
And e'en as he gazed, he shuddered—then quick
 shouted, "Make all secure !
For your lives, every man to the sail-ropes, and see
 that all's furled safe and sure !"

The moments were counted by heart-beats, so
 quickly the storm-fiend drew near;
Where a minute ago was clear blue sky now
 stretched heavy cloud dark and drear.
Each man watched the face of the skipper, each
 one tied a rope round his waist
And fastened himself to some stout beam, or fast
 to his neighbor was laced,
And thus, breathless, waited the storm-burst—
 when, sweet through that horrible calm,
There came to the ears of the sailors the sound of
 a Catholic psalm !

Ave sanctissima, we lift our souls to thee.

A maid in the cabin was singing as the storm came
 on over the deep—

Ora pro nobis, 'tis nightfall on the sea.

And serene in the gathering darkness was lulling
 a baby to sleep:

Ora pro nobis, the wave doth rock our sleep.

Through the singing the storm-fiend seemed waiting and gathering strength for the blow.

Ora, mater, ora, Star of the deep.

Of a sudden, up started the helmsman, as the words of the psalm died below—

“I believe, mates, that singing will save us! For I’ve often and often heard say

That if, in the midst of a tempest, there be but a maid near to pray

To Mary, the Mother of Sorrows, and she pray with a babe on her knee,

The danger will sure be abated—run, Jemmy, you’re nearest, and see

If she’s holding the babe to her bosom? If so, we are saved from our grave;

With the Star of the sea for our succor, we need fear neither storm-fiend nor wave.

Down on your knees for your lives, men! Sing, girl, sing the Catholic psalm”—

Thou that hast looked on death, aid us when death is near,

Whisper of heaven to faith, sweet mother, sweet mother, hear—

Ora pro nobis, the wave must rock our sleep.

Loud the storm-fiend was shrieking in fury, but the Catholic psalm still rang on—

Ora, mater, ora, Star of the deep.

Till at last the wild demon was vanquished, and the terrible peril was gone.

Then, drifting without helm or rudder, drifting
without spar or mast,
Drifting and drifting ever, the ship through the
dreary night passed;
But we saw, when the on-coming morning had
driven the night-fog away,
And the rays of the golden sun rising foretold a
bright beautiful day,
That she'd drifted safe into harbor, and there,
while no anchor bound,
Nor ever a cable held her, she rode gently on, safe
and sound.
With one impulse we thought of the maiden, and
hastened to bring her ashore;
We all hurried down to the cabin, but paused as
we entered the door,
For sitting there facing the gang-way, with one
hand pressed close to her side,
And the baby asleep on her bosom, the saintly
singer had died.
Her lips were still partly open, her last glance was
upward cast—
She had sung until she, like the sailors, safe into
harbor had passed.

*Ora pro nobis, the wave must rock our sleep,
Ora, mater, ora, Star of the deep.*

Elizabeth Ingram Hubbard (Adapted).

INDEPENDENCE BELL—JULY 4, 1776.

When the Declaration of Independence was adopted by Congress, the event was announced by ringing the old State-House bell, which bore the inscription "Proclaim liberty throughout the land, to all the inhabitants thereof!" The old bellman stationed his little grandson at the door of the hall, to await the instructions of the door-keeper when to ring. At the word, the young patriot rushed out, and clapping his hands, shouted :—"Ring! RING! RING!"

THERE was a tumult in the city,
In the quaint old Quaker town,
And the streets were rife with people
Pacing restless up and down—
People gathering at the corners,
Where they whispered each to each,
And the sweat stood on their temples
With the earnestness of speech.

As the bleak Atlantic currents
Lash the wild Newfoundland shore,
So they beat against the State House,
So they surged against the door;
And the mingling of their voices
Made a harmony profound,
Till the quiet street of Chestnut
Was all turbulent with sound.

"Will they do it?" "Dare they do it?"
"Who is speaking?" "What's the news?"
"What of Adams?" "What of Sherman?"
"Oh, God grant they won't refuse!"

“ Make some way there ! ” “ Let me nearer ! ”

“ I am stifling ! ” “ Stifle, then !

When a nation's life's at hazard,
We've no time to think of men ! ”

So they surged against the State House,
While all solemnly inside

Sat the “ Continental Congress,”

Truth and reason for their guide.

O'er a simple scroll debating,

Which, though simple it might be,
Yet should shake the cliffs of England
With the thunders of the free.

Far aloft in that high steeple

Sat the bellman, old and gray ;

He was weary of the tyrant

And his iron-sceptred sway.

So he sat, with one hand ready

On the clapper of the bell,

When his eye could catch the signal,

The long expected news to tell.

See ! See ! The dense crowd quivers

Through all its lengthy line,

As the boy beside the portal

Hastens forth to give the sign !

With his little hands uplifted,

Breezes dallying with his hair,

Hark ! with deep, clear intonation,

Breaks his young voice on the air :

Hushed the people's swelling murmur,
 Whilst the boy cries joyously;
"Ring!" he shouts, "Ring! grandpapa,
 Ring! oh, ring for Liberty!"
Quickly, at the given signal,
 The old bellman lifts his hand,
Forth he sends the good news, making
 Iron music through the land.

How they shouted! What rejoicing!
 How the old bell shook the air,
Till the clang of freedom ruffled
 The calmly gliding Delaware!
How the bonfires and the torches
 Lighted up the night's repose,
And from the flames, like fabled Phoenix,
 Our glorious liberty arose!

That old State House bell is silent,
 Hushed is now its clamorous tongue;
But the spirit it awakened,
 Still is living—ever young;
And when we greet the smiling sunlight
 On the fourth of each July,
We will ne'er forget the bellman
 Who, betwixt the earth and sky,
Rung out, loudly, "Independence;"
 Which, please God, shall never die!

ALEC YEATON'S SON.

THE wind it wailed, the wind it moaned,
 And the white caps flecked the sea ;
 "An' I would to God," the skipper groaned,
 "I had not my boy with me !"

Snug in the stern-sheets little John
 Laughed as the scud swept by ;
 But the skipper's sunburnt cheek grew wan
 As he watched the wicked sky.

"Would he were at his mother's side !"
 And the skipper's eyes were dim.
 "Good Lord in heaven, if ill betide,
 What would become of him ?

"For me—my muscles are as steel ;
 For me let hap what may ;
 I might make shift upon the keel
 Until the break o' day.

"But he—he is so weak and small,
 So young, scarce learned to stand—
 Oh, pitying Father of us all,
 I trust him in Thy hand !

"For Thou, who markest from on high
 A sparrow's fall—each one !
 Surely, O Lord, Thou'lt have an eye
 On Alec Yeaton's son !"

Then, helm hard aport, right straight he sailed
Toward the headland light;
The wind it moaned, the wind it wailed,
And black, black fell the night.

Then burst a storm to make one quail,
Though housed from winds and waves—
They who could tell about that gale
Must rise from watery graves !

Sudden it came, as sudden went;
Ere half the night was sped
The winds were hushed, the waves were spent,
And the stars shone overhead.

Now, as the morning mist grew thin,
The folks on Gloucester shore
Saw a little figure floating in,
Secure on a floating oar !

Up rose the cry: “ A wreck ! a wreck !
Pull, mates, and waste no breath—”
They knew it, though ’twas but a speck
Upon the edge of death !

Long did they marvel in the town
At God, His strange decree,
That let the stalwart skipper drown
And the little child go free !

CASABIANCA.

THE boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled ;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm ;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on ; he would not go
Without his father's word ;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud, " Say, father, say,
If yet my task be done !"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

" Speak, father," once again he cried,
" If I may yet be gone !"
And but the booming shot replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair ;
And looked from that lone post of death
In still yet brave despair ;

And shouted but once more aloud,

“ My father, must I stay ? ”

While o’er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,

They caught the flag on high,

And streamed above the gallant child

Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound ;

The boy, oh ! where was he ?

Ask of the winds that far around

With fragments strewed the sea,

With shroud and mast and pennon fair,

That well had borne their part ;

But the noblest thing that perished there

Was that young faithful heart.

Felicia Hemans.

GRANDPAPA’S SPECTACLES.

GRANDPAPA’S spectacles cannot be found,

He has searched all the rooms, high and low,
round and round ;

Now he calls to the young ones, and what does he
say ?

“ Ten cents ” to the child who will find them to-
day.

Then Harry and Nelly and Edward all ran,
And a most thorough search for the glasses began.
And dear little Nell in her generous way
Said, "I'll look for them, Grandpa, without any
pay."

All through the big Bible she searched with care,
It lies on the table by Grandpapa's chair.
They feel in his pockets, they peep in his hat,
They pull out the sofa and shake out the mat.

Then down on the floor, like good-natured bears,
Go Harry and Ned under tables and chairs,
Till quite out of breath, Ned is heard to declare,
He believed that those glasses are not anywhere.

But Nelly, who, leaning on Grandpapa's knee,
Was thinking most earnestly, "where can they
be?"

Looked suddenly up in the kind, faded eyes,
And her own shining brown ones grew big with
surprise.

She clapped with her hands, all her dimples came
out,
She turned to the boys with a bright, roguish shout,
"You may leave off your looking, both Harry and
Ned,
For there are the glasses on Grandpapa's head!"

THE FLIGHT OF YOUTH.

THERE are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain ;
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign ;
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain :
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again.

Richard H. Stoddard.

CHRISTMAS ON THE SAN GABR'EL.

LAMAR and his Rangers camped at dawn on the
banks of the San Gabr'el,
Under the mossy live oaks, in the heart of a lonely
dell ;

With the cloudless Texas sky above and the mus-
quite grass below,
And all the prairie lying still in a misty, silv'ry
glow.

The sound of the horses cropping grass, the fall of
a nut full ripe,
The stir of a weary soldier, or the tap of a smoked-
out pipe,
Fell only as sounds in a dream may fall upon a
drowsy ear,
Till the captain said, "It is Christmas Day! so,
boys, we will spend it here,
"For the sake of our homes and our childhood,
we will give the day its dues."
Then some leaped up to prepare the feast, and
some sat still to muse,
And some pulled scarlet yupon berries and wax-
white mistletoe,
To garland the stand-up rifles—for Christmas has
no foe.

And every heart had a pleasant thought or a ten-
der memory
Of unforgotten Christmastides that never more
might be;
They felt the thrill of a mother's kiss, they heard
the happy psalm,
And the men grew still, and all the camp was full
of a gracious calm.

“Halt!” cried the sentinel, and lo! from out of
the brushwood near

There came, with a weary, fainting step, a man in
mortal fear,

A brutal man with a tiger’s heart; but yet he
made this plea—

“I am dying of hunger and thirst; do what you
will with me.”

They knew him well—who did not know the cruel
San Sabatan,

The robber of the Rio Grande, who spared not any
man?

In low, fierce tones they called his name, and
looked at a coil of rope;

And the man crouched down in abject fear—how
could he dare to hope?

The captain had just been thinking of the Book
his mother read,

Of a Saviour born on Christmas Day, who bowed
on the Cross His head;

Blending the thought of his mother’s tears with
the Holy Mother’s grief—

And when he saw San Sabatan he thought of the
dying thief.

He spoke to the men in whispers, and they heeded
the words he said,

And brought to the perishing robber water and
meat and bread.

He ate and drank like a famished wolf and then
lay down to rest,
And the camp perchance had a stiller feast for its
strange Christmas guest.

But ere ever the morning dawned again, the cap-
tain touched his hand :

“ Here is a horse and some meat and bread ; fly to
the Rio Grande !

Fly for your life ! We follow hard, touch nothing
on your way—

Your life was only spared because 'twas Jesus
Christ's birthday.”

He watched him ride as the falcon flies, then
turned to the breaking day ;

The men awoke, the Christmas berries were quietly
cast away ;

And, full of thought, they saddled again and rode
off into the West—

May God be merciful to them, as they were to their
guest !

Amelia Barr.

MEASURING THE BABY.

WE measured the riotous baby
Against the cottage wall—

A lily grew on the threshold,
And the boy was just as tall ;

A royal tiger-lily,
With spots of purple and gold,
And a heart like a jeweled chalice,
The fragrant dew to hold.

Without, the bluebirds whistled
High up in the old roof-trees,
And to and fro at the window
The red rose rocked her bees ;
And the wee pink fists of the baby
Were never a moment still,
Snatching at shine and shadow
That danced on the lattice sill.

His eyes were wide as bluebells—
His mouth like a flower unblown—
Two little bare feet, like funny white mice,
Peeped out from his snowy gown ;
And we thought, with a thrill of rapture
That yet had a touch of pain,
When June rolls around with her roses,
We'll measure the boy again.

Ah me ! in a darkened chamber,
With the sunshine shut away,
Through tears that fell like a bitter rain,
We measured the boy to-day ;

And the little bare feet, that were dimpled
And sweet as a budding rose,
Lay side by side together,
In the hush of a long repose !

Up from the dainty pillow,
White as the risen dawn,
The fair little face lay smiling,
With the light of heaven thereon ;
And the dear little hands, like rose-leaves
Dropped from a rose, lay still,
Never to snatch at the sunshine
That crept to the shrouded sill !

We measured the sleeping baby
With ribbons white as snow,
For the shining rosewood casket
That waited him below ;
And out of the darkened chamber
We went with a childless moan—
To the height of the sinless angels
Our little one had grown.

Emma Alice Brown.

CHRIST, THE GLEANER.

IN a vision of the night
Looked I upon fields of light,
Spreading broad beneath the moon,
Fair as though the night were noon.

Moonlight fell on golden sheaves,
Woven as the reaper weaves ;
Bounteous harvest gathered there
Hath repaid the Master's care.

All His toilers soundly sleep,
One alone doth vigil keep ;
Who is this that cometh last
Where the reaper's feet have passed ?

One who walketh grave and slow,
Going as the gleaners go,
Stooping oft full tenderly,
That no grain escape His eye ;

Gathering in secluded spot
What the gleaners have forgot ;
In His mantle deep and wide
Many a broken stalk doth hide.

Ere the morning shall arise,
Christ, the Gleaner, with His prize
Maketh goodly sheaf and crown
Out of what was trodden down.

Bruised and broken, held unsound,
Left to rot upon the ground—
E'en the wisest gleaner saw
Nothing there but worthless straw.

Only He with eyes of light
Pierced beyond our mortal sight ;
In the sullied husk He knew
Living grain was hid from view.

Lo ! it is the darkest hour,
Stars have set and clouds do lower ;
Christ, the Gleaner, gleaneth still,
Casting radiance where He will.

When the sun shall flood the land,
And the golden sheaves shall stand,
Ripened for the Harvest Home,
Waiting till the Master come :

Riper, fuller, none than they
Trodden once into the clay ;
Gleaned from dust by hand Divine,
In eternal light they shine.

Rosa Mulholland.

COMFORTING GRANDMA.

Grandma sat in her old arm-chair,
Our baby on her knee;
Three-score-and-ten were grandma's years,
Sweet Baby Bell's were three.

The baby's tongue was chattering
As fast as it could go,
Of things she meant to have and do
When older she should grow.

"Ned says I's half-past free," she cried,
And tossed her yellow curls,
"An' when I's ten I'll be as bid
As all ze dreat bid dirls !"

Then grandma's eyes grew sad and dim:
"Dear pet, when you are ten
I'll be so old I scarce can walk,
Oh, what will I do then?"

O'er baby's face the shadow fell
Of wondering, troubled thought ;
But soon she brightened, she had found
The comfort that she sought :

"Why, dram'ma, don't oo fink," she cried,
With baby logic deep,
"Zat when oo can't walk any more
Oo'd better learn to *creep*?"

Carrie Blake Morgan.

LITTLE LIZETTE.

As little Lizette was out walking one day,
Attired with great splendor in festival array,
She met little Gretchen, in sober-hued gown,
With a basket of eggs, trudging off to the town.

“Good-morning ! Good-morning !” cried little Lizette,

“You haven’t been over to visit me yet.
Come over and live with me always ; pray do ;
For I have no sisters ; how many have you ?”

“Nein,” answered wee Gretchen. Lizette cried,
“Ah, me !

I have to pretend I have sisters, you see.
But try as I will, I can’t make it seem true.
And I have no brothers. How many have you ?”

“Nein,” answered wee Gretchen. “Nine !” echoed Lizette,

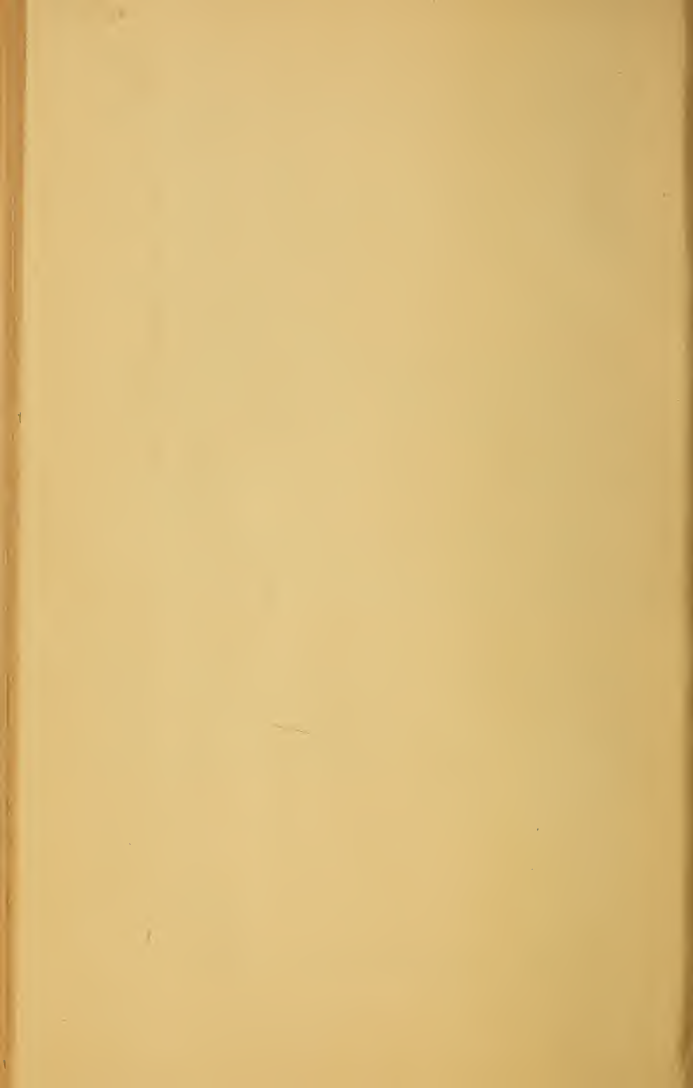
“Why, you are the luckiest girl I have met !
And have you a baby at home, tell me now ?”

“Nein,” answered wee Gretchen, and made a droll bow.

Then lingered Lizette by the roadside that day,
To watch the wee maiden go trudging away.

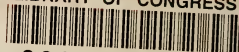
“Nine brothers, nine sisters, nine babies to pet !
Oh, I wish I was Gretchen !” sighed little Lizette.

Katherine S. Alcorn.





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